

THE ART BALLADS OF CARL LOEWE

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INTRODUCTION

Largely forgotten since his death, Carl Loewe was one of the most prolific lied and ballad composers of his time. Craig Timberlake refers to him as “the greatest of all German ballad composers.”¹ Indeed, Loewe’s unique approach to the musical setting of ballad text reveals his true talents as a composer. Though there are published books and articles concerning Loewe’s life and works, relatively few detailed analyses of his works exist. He is most often mentioned as a side note or in conjunction with his contemporary Franz Schubert. Most sources agree, however, that Loewe’s greatest contribution to the musical repertory is in the art ballad.

Loewe composed these large-scale works for voice and piano with textural, harmonic, and melodic variety in addition to variety in character. Credited with the development of the Romantic ballad, he advanced this genre of song to new heights. He used subtle and sophisticated melodies, chord progressions, and text painting, among other devices, to vividly bring the ballad texts to life. The piano accompaniments were uniquely and meticulously crafted to create vivid scenes and moods. The new, elevated status of the piano accompaniment allowed the piano to provide commentary on the action. The beauty of his

¹ Craig Timberlake. “Bicentennial of a Balladeer: Carl Loewe (1796–1869),” *Journal of Singing*, Vol. 53, No. 3 (1997): 33. <https://search-proquest.com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/docview/1400683?pq-origsite=summon>

songs lies in the complete scene he creates for the listener. In fact, Loewe was creating more than just a song, but a drama enacted by singer and pianist.

The musical setting of early ballads was simple, as composers were mostly concerned with allowing the singer to deliver the text. The piano accompaniment usually acted as harmonic support and atmosphere. Carl Loewe's conception of the art ballad married the duties of the voice and piano. Now, both instruments were equally important to tell the story. The overall result was a composition full of drama and emotion. Loewe came to his own characteristic compositional style early in his career, and stuck closely to it through most of his life.

This study will focus on three of Carl Loewe's ballads: *Erlkönig* (Op. 1 no. 3), *Heinrich der Vogler* (Op. 56 no. 1) and *Archibald Douglas* (Op. 128). These ballads represent his compositional style from early to late in his career and are illustrative of his incredibly detailed approach to text-setting. I will use textual and musical analyses to examine how Loewe set the three texts and offer performance suggestions for *Erlkönig* that may heighten the musical expression of the ballad.

CHAPTER 1: CARL LOEWE

Johann Carl Gottfried Loewe (November 30, 1796 – April 20, 1869) was a German composer, tenor, and pianist. His large output of vocal works, and more specifically ballads, led him to be named the “Schubert of the North”. His Romantic interest in nature, the supernatural, and the human psyche manifested itself in the majority of his compositions.

The youngest of twelve children, Loewe was born into a loving and musical family in Lobejün, a small town in Northern Germany situated about twenty kilometers north of Halle (the birthplace of Handel), or sixty kilometers north of Leipzig. His father, Andreas, served as a school teacher and choir master, and began developing his youngest son’s musical talents early on.² Loewe recalled, “When I first became conscious of myself, I knew how to play the piano and the organ, and could sing at sight without being able to remember how I had learned these things, without even the slightest exertion.”³ His mother and sisters piqued his active imagination through recitations of fairy tales, legends, and ballads.⁴ Combined with his musical inclinations, his “unrestrained open-air life” led to the intimacy he enjoyed with nature that pervaded so many of his compositions.⁵ Albert Bach wrote, “the mind of the

² Ewan West, “Loewe, Carl.” *Grove Music Online*. ed. Deanne Root. Accessed 2 February, 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

³ Albert Bernhard Bach, *The Art Ballad, Loewe and Schubert* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1897), 50.

⁴ James Deaville, “The Lied at mid century.” *The Cambridge Companion to the Lied*. ed. James Parsons (Cambridge: University Press, 2004), 147.

⁵ Bach, *The Art Ballad, Loewe and Schubert*, 50.

boy—who in his unhindered rambles was fond of associating with hunters, herdsmen, and fishermen, in order to gather from them many a tale of spectres of the woods, hob-goblins, and water-fairies—early received a poetical turn, with a predominant tendency to the romantic, which easily explains his subsequent predilection for the ballad.”⁶ In short, his proclivity towards both nature and Romantic literature forged his fondness for ballad composition.

Loewe began his studies at the Gymnasium of the Orphanage in Halle (a secondary school) around age thirteen, studying under Daniel Gottlob Türk (1756–1813) who instructed Loewe in music theory, singing, and composition. He was reported to have had an excellent soprano voice in his younger years, often singing the role of the Queen of the Night from Mozart’s *Die Zauberflöte*. Jerome I, King of Westphalia (the youngest brother of Napoleon Bonaparte), enjoyed the young Loewe’s performances so much that he provided Loewe with a yearly allowance to complete his studies.⁷

Upon entering the University in Halle in 1817, Loewe joined the Vocal Quartet Association headed by Adolf B. Marx. It was there that he met his future wife, the soprano Julie von Jacob. Loewe composed his first two ballads, *Edward* and *Erlkönig*, the following year (1818). Impressed and excited by these works, Marx had them published. These became two of the three ballads in Loewe’s Opus 1.

After relocating to Dresden for a year (1819–1820), Loewe met the composer Carl Maria von Weber, with whom he enjoyed a lifelong friendship. In his autobiography, Loewe

⁶ Bach, *The Art Ballad, Loewe and Schubert*, 51.

⁷ Bach, *The Art Ballad, Loewe and Schubert*, 55.

relates a story of an evening when he played Weber's A-flat Major Sonata for the author. He writes:

Frau v. Weber trat, während ich am Piano sass, ein und sagte: 'Ach, ich dachte, Du wärst es, lieber Mann.' Ich war nicht wenig stolz auf diesen Irrthum der trefflichen Frau.⁸

('Weber's wife, while [I was] sitting at the piano, came in and said, 'Oh, I thought it was you, dear husband.' I was [very] proud of this mistake of the excellent woman.')

Around the same time, Loewe traveled to Jena and had the opportunity to meet Goethe, whom he admired greatly. Unfortunately he was not able to play his version of *Erlkönig* for Goethe, but he wrote about their encounter—

Ich sagte ihm, wie ich die Ballade vor allen andern Dichtungsformen liebe, wie die volksthümliche Sage seines Erlkönig in dem grossartig romantischen Gewande seiner Dictung mich ganz hingenommen; so hingenommen, dass ich diesen Erlkönig habe componiren müssen: 'Ich hielte schon deshalb den Erlkönig für die beste deutsche Ballade, weil die Personen alle redend eingeführt seien.' 'Da haben Sie Recht,' sagte Goethe.⁹

('I told him that I liked the ballad above all other forms of poetry, and how the popular legend of the 'Erlking,' in the grand and romantic garb of his poem, had quite captivated me; so much so, indeed, that I could not help setting it to music. I considered the 'Erlking' to be the best of German ballads – for this reason, that the characters represented in it were all introduced in dialogue. 'There you are right,' said Goethe.')¹⁰

Loewe's account of this encounter highlights the appeal that the ballad genre held for him—the grandiosity and romanticism of the poetry, the characters, and the interaction of the

⁸ Carl Loewe, and C. H. Bitter ed. *Dr. Carl Loewe's Selbstbiographie* (Berlin: Müller, 1870), 68.

⁹ Loewe, *Dr. Carl Loewe's Selbstbiographie*, 76–77.

¹⁰ Bach, *The Art Ballad, Loewe and Schubert*, 66.

characters through dialogue. He expresses the same sentiment as other composers, that he felt compelled to set Goethe's words to music.

Following this meeting, Loewe departed from Jena to Berlin to sit for a musical exam. The week-long exam was administered by Zelter, and it was at his house that Loewe stayed for the duration. After successfully passing the test, Loewe was appointed the choirmaster of St. Jacob's in Stettin. Loewe married Julie von Jacob and moved to Stettin in 1821, where he was appointed a teacher at the Gymnasium. Julie's tragic death in 1823 turned his compositions toward morose subjects, including his composition *Herodes' Klage um Mariamne*, op. 4 no. 1 ("Herod's Lament for Mariamne"). Two years following her death, Loewe met another soprano with a beautiful voice, Auguste Lange, whom he married shortly thereafter. This new relationship produced a flurry of compositional creativity. He wrote the oratorio *Die Zerstörung von Jerusalem*, op. 30 ("The Destruction of Jerusalem") in 1830 which was received with great acclaim in both Stettin and Berlin. August Wellmer and Albert Bach both refer to Loewe's oratorios as pushing the boundaries of the oratorio form. Albert Bach writes, "*The Destruction of Jerusalem* ... belongs to the category of modern dramatic oratorio—a form which has been adopted and developed by Franz Liszt in his *Cecilia and Elisabeth*, and by Schumann in his *Paradise and Peri*."¹¹ In 1832, Loewe received an honorary Ph.D. from the University of Greifswald.

Loewe enjoyed great successes as a vocalist, with triumphant reviews from concerts in all of the big cities across Germany. Loewe wrote in a letter to his wife from Vienna:

It is as if the Viennese were spell-bound by my compositions. They listen with a breathless stillness and eagerness such as I never before experienced... when they say

¹¹ Bach, *The Art Ballad, Loewe and Schubert*, 73.

that only now do they know what singing is, they rank me above their best singers, above their dearest Schubert!¹²

In addition to being an excellent singer, he was also an accomplished pianist. Following one of Loewe's performances, Schumann wrote, "Rich in that inward, deep melody, which characterizes his ballads, he {Loewe}... plays truly enough with his fingers what he hears within him."¹³ A great improviser, he often asked his audience for poems, setting them to music on the spot. Hallmark says, "Indeed, Loewe was an incredibly prolific storyteller who could turn any subject matter into a pretext for a musical setting."¹⁴

Among his many admirers was the Crown Prince Frederick William, as well as Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. Hugo Wolf was a great fan of Loewe's ballads, and especially liked his setting of *Erlkönig*, remarking that he liked it better than Schubert's.¹⁵ Liszt and Wagner were known to have spoken very highly of his works. Julie von Bothwell, Loewe's oldest daughter, transcribed a meeting between Liszt and Loewe one evening in 1841 before a concert Liszt gave in Stettin:

After the great *virtuoso* [Liszt] had finished the sonata, he said: "Now Maestro, you must sing to me a ballad before I go, as I wish to take it with me." Loewe sang the old Scottish ballad, "Der Mutter Geist" (The Mother's Ghost). Loewe had finished the wild ghostly ballad, and Liszt was still listening in the arm-chair, when suddenly the latter jumped up and left the room. In the evening the concert-hall was crowded, and the audience became impatient, for Liszt was late. Twenty minutes after the hour announced, with downcast eyes he entered the hall, looking like Dante in his younger years. He played a beautiful fantasia which was not in his programme; for Loewe's ghostly ballad had so impressed his soul and mind, that he had to give vent to his

¹² Quoted in Bach, *The Art Ballad, Loewe and Schubert*, 83.

¹³ Anneliese Landau, *The Lied: The Unfolding of its Style* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, Inc., 1980), 71.

¹⁴ Rufus Hallmark, *German Lieder in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 185.

¹⁵ Susan Youens, "Tradition and innovation: the Lieder of Hugo Wolf." *The Cambridge Companion to the Lied*. ed. James Parsons (Cambridge: University Press, 2004), 210.

emotion before he could begin his solos. A storm of applause greeted both the great *virtuoso* and Loewe, who afterwards received Liszt's special thanks from the platform.¹⁶

Eva Wagner (Richard Wagner's daughter and Liszt's granddaughter) corroborated this story as being true, and also acknowledged the fact that her father was indeed an admirer of Loewe's compositions.¹⁷

Unfortunately, Loewe's works were largely forgotten and ignored after his death in favor of Schubert's lieder. His exclusion from the Western canon could be contributed to several factors. Stettin, the small city in the North where Loewe settled, was several days journey away from the larger music metropolises in Germany. Albert Bach writes, "Unfortunately it must be said that, on the whole, Loewe was rather neglected in his own town, and did not meet with the recognition due to him; and it is astonishing that nevertheless he had the spirit to go on composing, and that even in his last works there is so much fresh and youthful life."¹⁸ Loewe said of Vienna, "In Vienna I find only confirmed what I always clearly felt—that I ought to have from the outset entered into a wider sphere of action and larger surroundings."¹⁹

While he did perform outside of Stettin, Loewe's recitals were for smaller, more intimate audience sizes, as was fitting for the genre of music being performed. The audience typically numbered less than two hundred at the high end. Hallmark remarks that although the recitals were well received, these small gatherings could not garner for Loewe the same

¹⁶ Bach, *The Art Ballad, Loewe and Schubert*, 79–80.

¹⁷ Bach, *The Art Ballad, Loewe and Schubert*, 198–199.

¹⁸ Bach, *The Art Ballad, Loewe and Schubert*, 87.

¹⁹ Quoted in Bach, *The Art Ballad, Loewe and Schubert*, 86–87.

public attention and acclaim as would come from the larger audiences at performances of symphonic works or operas.²⁰

Finally, Loewe continued to compose ballads long after the popularity of the sung ballad began to be eclipsed by the instrumental ballades being composed for piano and orchestra. In addition, the lieder enjoying continued public and domestic success in the mid-nineteenth century tended on the whole towards simpler settings, unlike the complex settings Loewe created for his ballads.²¹ In a letter to his wife, Loewe wrote of his frustration: “Publishers here are afraid of the difficulties which the execution and accompaniment of my ballads offer; they call them witches’ work.”²²

While he is best known for his more than 400 lieder and balladen, Loewe also composed several piano works, string quartets, and choral works in addition to two symphonies and two operas. He died in 1869, and it is said that his heart is buried inside the organ at his church in Stettin, the Church of St. Jacob. There have been several champions through the years who have tried to revive interest in Loewe’s compositions: Max Runze (President of the Loewe Association), Julie von Bothwell (Loewe’s eldest daughter), August Wellmer (the first to publish a biography of Loewe in 1887) and Albert Bach (writer and pedagogue on singing). Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau and Hermann Prey have recorded many of his lieder. Tomassini wrote that Prey might be the greatest interpreter of Loewe’s ballads.²³

²⁰ Hallmark, *German Lieder in the Nineteenth Century*, 181.

²¹ James Deaville, “The Lied at mid century,” 150.

²² Quoted in Bach, *The Art Ballad, Loewe and Schubert*, 84.

²³ Anthony Tomassini, “The Songs of Carl Loewe.” *New York Times Music Review*, Jan 11, 1996; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times pg. H18.

CHAPTER 2: GERMAN ROMANTIC BALLAD

By the end of the nineteenth century, ballads comprised an important portion of the German vocal repertory. The Romantic ballad in literature exemplified the two basic tenets of German Romanticism: “the insatiable quest to go beyond what is known and the embrace of the contradictory or dichotomous, the mingling of two seemingly incompatible, opposing elements into a singular entity.”²⁴ In the art ballad, the piano accompaniment becomes a significant partner to the voice. Rather than just the means for harmonic support, the accompaniment now draws attention to itself and allows for more tone-painting and commentary on the text. Carl Loewe sought to enhance the meaning of epic poetic text through the medium of music using the voice and piano. In setting these texts to music, historians give much of the credit of the development of the art ballad to Loewe, who composed over 150 ballads that spanned his entire career.

Ballad in Literature

Literature in late eighteenth century Germany saw a renewed interest in Volkslied (folk song). These Volkslied were seen by the cultural elite of the time as having a “pure” and

²⁴ Deborah Stein and Robert Spillman, *Poetry into Song: Performance and Analysis of Lieder* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 5.

“natural” quality to them that was authentic to the identity of the German people.²⁵ Johann Gottfried Herder’s *Stimmen der Völker in Liedern* (1788–89) and the translation of Bishop Thomas Percy’s *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765) significantly impacted the German people’s attention to its Volkslied.²⁶ Herder influenced other poets and writers with his views on the merits of the native language and idioms. This attention to Volkslied grew out of the political movement of Nationalism that was sweeping through Germany in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. The nationalism movement was a “conscious expression of national feeling, and the deliberate adoption, to that end, of the melodic and rhythmic idiom of folk song and folk dance.”²⁷ “Germanness” became a source of pride, and proponents of the movement concentrated their search for the true collective identity of German peoples through culture, language, history, and folklore.²⁸

At the same time, the new “Sturm und Drang” (“storm and stress”) literary movement was gaining popularity. “Sturm und Drang” writers sought to confront extreme and intense emotions and did not shy away from violent or frightening descriptions or situations. This interest in both Volkslied and “Sturm und Drang” led to the conception of the Romantic ballad. The ballad is an epic poem, meaning that it is a narrative work. The Romantic ballad is usually based on historical or mythical subjects, and is often fantastical in nature. In these

²⁵ Francien Markx, “Towards a German Romantic Concept of the Ballad.” *Goethe Yearbook, Volume 19* (2012), 3. Accessed: November 3, 2019. <https://muse-jhu-edu.ezproxy.tcu.edu/article/478856>.

²⁶ Anneliese Landau, *The Lied: The Unfolding of its Style* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, Inc., 1980), 59.

²⁷ John Owen Ward, ed., *The Oxford Companion to Music* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 673.

²⁸ Andrea Lindmayr-Brandl, “The Modern Invention of the ‘Tenorlied’: A Histriography of the Early German Lied Setting.” *Early Music History, Volume 32* (Cambridge: University Press, 2013), 123.

often lengthy poems, the narration of the supernatural, legendary, or historical event is unfolded with very little context or background information;²⁹ “we are given only the sketchiest preliminaries to the dénouement.”³⁰

German Romantic poets explored different psychological states and feelings, from the darkest depths of human despair and anguish to the furthest reaches of hope, ecstasy, and joy. These poets used nature, introspection, and mysticism to delve into the unknown and the extreme emotional states of the human condition. German scholar Siegbert S. Prawer states: “The most characteristic art of German Romanticism transports reader, viewer and listener to a frontier between the visible and the invisible, the tangible and the intangible.”³¹

Ballad Poets: Herder, Bürger and Goethe

Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803) believed the idea of nationality and the true voice of the German people came from Volkslied, and that the use of Volkslied would lead to a new, national literary style. Volkslied, German folk songs or poetry, are the simple songs of the people, passed down through oral tradition (the word “Lied” was used indiscriminately to describe poems with or without music).³² Herder became interested in collecting German

²⁹ Markx, “Towards a German Romantic Concept of the Ballad,” 3.

³⁰ Susan Youens, “Tradition and innovation: the Lieder of Hugo Wolf.” *The Cambridge Companion to the Lied*. ed. James Parsons (Cambridge: University Press, 2004), 210.

³¹ Quoted in Deborah Stein and Robert Spillman, *Poetry into Song: Performance and Analysis of Lieder* (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1996), 5.

³² Leon Plantinga, *Romantic Music: A History of Musical Style in Nineteenth-Century Music* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1984), 108.

Volkslied after coming across translations of the English and Scottish ballads collected by Bishop Thomas Percy and James MacPherson. Thomas Percy's collection of Scottish ballads, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765) and James MacPherson's collection of Ossian's poems highly influenced Herder's thoughts on the heart of German literature. He wrote, "Unless our literature is founded on our *Volk*, we shall write eternally for closet sages and disgusting critics out of whose mouths and stomachs we shall get back what we have given."³³ His views on the merits of their native language and idioms inspired some of the greatest ballad writers to look to German Volkslied, including Bürger, Goethe, and Schiller. Robertson wrote of Herder, "he is the gatekeeper of the nineteenth century. As a maker of literature, a poet, he does not, it is true, take rank beside the masters of German poetry; but as a spiritual force and intellectual innovator, he is second to none. The whole fabric of German thought and literature at the close of the eighteenth century would have been lacking in stability without the broad and solid basis afforded by his work."³⁴

The poet Gottfried August Bürger (1748–1794) is credited as the creator of the German Romantic ballad in literature. The ballad *Lenore*, published in 1773 in the *Göttinger Musenalmanach*, is his most famous work. Bürger's ballad was highly influenced by Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, and incorporated love, ghosts and Death within the plot. Unlike any other work that had come before it, Bürger depicted much more drama in the ballad through the addition of dialogue in the text.³⁵ *Lenore* was quickly translated into

³³ Gene Bluestein, "The Advantages of Barbarism: Herder and Whitman's Nationalism." *Journal Of the History of Ideas*, vol. 24 no. 1 (1963), 118.

³⁴ John George Robertson, *A History of German Literature* (New York: Putnam, 1902), 293.

³⁵ *The New Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. 5 (Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2005), 845.

multiple languages and reprinted worldwide, having lasting and stimulating effects on the Romantic literary movement throughout the continent. The mix of Volkslied style, nationalism, and “Sturm und Drang” propelled *Lenore* to the forefront of literature at the time.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832) showed a similar interest in the study of Volkslied and nature – a direct result of his close relationship with Herder, whose ideas on Volkslied and language directly influenced Goethe’s early writing style. Under Herder’s influence, Goethe broke away from the restrained Rococo literary conventions.³⁶ Through his deeper studies of folk poetry, Goethe “became convinced that it [was] more relevant for writers, and for artists as well, to let themselves be led by their emotions.”³⁷ He studied the plays and poetry of Shakespeare and felt a deep connection between his literary efforts and those of Shakespeare.³⁸ Although the “Sturm und Drang” period in German literature spanned only twenty years, Goethe’s writings, especially in his early period at Weimar, completely embodied the spirit of the style. Following the phenomenal success in 1774 of his first novel, *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (“The Sorrows of Young Werther”), Goethe became one of the most famous writers in Germany.

A prolific ballad poet, *Erlkönig* (1782) was Goethe’s most famous ballad. His works wrestle with opposing dualities including man versus nature, reason versus emotion, and joy versus sorrow.³⁹ The length of Goethe’s ballad narratives are more succinct and the story

³⁶ Peter Boerner, *Goethe*, trans. Nancy Boerner (London: Haus Publishing, 2013), 19-21.

³⁷ Boerner, *Goethe*, 20.

³⁸ Boerner, *Goethe*, 30-31.

³⁹ Ingeborg Walther, “Goethe, Romanticism, and the German Lied: developing historical and transcultural literacies in the undergraduate curriculum.” *Die Unterrichtspraxis*, Vol. 1, no. 1 (2015), 6.

more concentrated than other ballad writers. While most other poets composed ballads of twenty verses or more, Goethe was able to condense a maximum amount of drama into very few verses—just eight in *Erlkönig*.⁴⁰ Goethe tended to employ narrative suggestion in the unfolding of his stories, leaving room for the reader to fill in details from their own imagination.⁴¹ Goethe inspired many younger writers, including Ludwig Uhland (1787–1862) and Friedrich Schiller (1759–1805). Schiller’s ballad cycle, *Die Schöne Müllerin*, represent some of his best work. Goethe continued to advance the genre of Romantic ballad until his death in 1832.

Ballad in Music

The ballad originated in the fifteenth century as a dance song, developed further in England through minstrels and bards regaling listeners with songs of historical and heroic subjects. The earliest sung ballads in medieval Germany were part of the oral tradition of the Minnesingers.⁴² These early ballads were set to simple accompaniment, and the music was often strophic.

The lied emerged as a major genre in the mid to late-eighteenth century “to accommodate the growing market of amateur music makers who readily responded to the

⁴⁰ Landau, *The Lied: The Unfolding of its Style*, 59.

⁴¹ Bach, *The Art Ballad, Loewe and Schubert*, 36.

⁴² John Owen Ward, ed. *The Oxford Companion to Music* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 644.

tuneful primacy of songs.”⁴³ The term lied is generally used to refer to German songs composed in the Romantic period or style. Though lieder can vary widely in their length, form, and accompaniment style, “all owe a good deal of their essential quality to two conditions of the period—the rise of the romantic school of poetry and the relative perfection and universal popularity of the pianoforte.”⁴⁴ Lieder quickly gained popularity in the mid-eighteenth to early nineteenth century among the growing middle class population. The increasing affordability of pianos and the “idealization of domesticity” made the lied ideally suited for intimate performances in the home.⁴⁵ The resurgence of ballad texts by Romantic poets around this time kindled the development of a new subset of the lied genre—the Romantic art ballad. Lieder composers began setting these epic narrative poems to music, though in the early years of the conception of the art ballad, there was no great distinction musically between their settings of text in ballads or other lieder. The early art ballads tended toward strophic settings, such as in Zelter’s compositions. Zumsteeg took the subgenre further with more complex, through-composed works.⁴⁶

The lied and ballad diverge in categorical delineation in that “the lied emerges from pure lyrical verses, the ballad from epic and dramatic ones.”⁴⁷ The lied expresses the emotion of a text or situation, whereas the ballad tells a story. The Romantic German art ballad is

⁴³ James Parsons, “Lied.” *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*. eds. R. Green, S. Cushman, and C. Cavanaugh (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2012), Retrieved from <https://search-credoreference-com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/content/entry/prpoetry/lied/0>.

⁴⁴ John Owen Ward, ed., *The Oxford Companion to Music*, 968.

⁴⁵ Mark Evan Bonds, *A History of Music in Western Culture* (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson Education Inc., 2003), 398.

⁴⁶ James Deaville, “The Lied at mid century.” *The Cambridge Companion to the Lied*. ed. James Parsons (Cambridge: University Press, 2004), 148.

⁴⁷ Landau, *The Lied: The Unfolding of its Style*, 59.

based on the form of ballads from Scotland and England. These ballads depict the action of an epic poem, and multiple characters are presented together with a plot using both dialogue and narration. Typically, the narrations frame the story in the opening and closing verses, with the dramatic action forming the main body of the poem through dialogue. These lengthier texts contained more shifts and contrast in emotion; thus, the art ballad required not only more variety in character representation, but also a unifying theme that could hold the whole piece together. The piano part became an equal partner in the presentation of the story, significantly elevating it from just harmonic support.⁴⁸

Dahlhaus suggests that the biggest difference between the ballad and lied is found in its presentation to the audience. In the lied, the audience is a passive listener. The listening experience lies in enjoying the mood created by the song. The hidden symbolism in the poetry is not presented to the audience directly, and they must come to their own conclusions as to what the text means to them. In a ballad, the singer acts as a storyteller, and the author/composer uses the musicians as a means to relate the story. The audience is actively engaged in imagining the narrative being presented by the singer, much like a storyteller relating a tale to a group of children. The excitement lies not only in the telling of the story, but also in the mood created by the storyteller and the vivid depictions that can be imagined by the listener. The success of a ballad composer lies in translating and capturing the drama, characters and scene in the music.⁴⁹ With the increasing accessibility of the lied, the new

⁴⁸ Donald Jay Grout and Claude V. Palisca, *A History of Western Music* (New York: Norton & Company, Inc., 1996), 614–615.

⁴⁹ Carl J. Dahlhaus, Bradford Robinson, trans., *Nineteenth-Century Music* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989), 104–105.

Romantic ballad composers were bringing the drama of opera and theater into the homes of the burgeoning middle class.

Zelter was one of the first Romantic ballad composers, and one of the first to set Goethe's texts to music. Goethe was a driving force in the musical development of lieder and ballads. His influence reached well beyond just his literary contributions. Goethe's preference of simplicity of the lied and his preference of lied composers was well known. He believed lied should have "little in the way of melismas, melodic ornament, or word repetition."⁵⁰ He admired the compositions of Zelter and Reichardt, but disliked those of Schubert. Though there is no evidence of his having seen or heard any of Loewe's music, based on Goethe's musical predilections, it is possible Loewe would have been on his list of preferred composers.

Beethoven wrote of Goethe what many composers felt—"Goethe's poems exert a great power over me not only because of their contents but also because of their rhythms; I am stimulated to compose by this language, which builds itself up to higher orders as if through spiritual agencies, and bears in itself the secret of harmonies."⁵¹

⁵⁰ Plantinga, *Romantic Music: A History of Musical Style in Nineteenth-Century Music*, 110.

⁵¹ Quoted in Friedrich Kerst and Henry Edward Krehbiel, *Beethoven: The Man and the Artist, Revealed in His Own Words* (New York: Huebsch, 1905).

<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/3528/3528-h/3528-h.htm> Accessed September 07, 2018.

Ballad Composers: Zelter, Zumsteeg and Loewe

Carl Friedrich Zelter (1758–1832) was an important musical figure in Berlin. The son of a bricklayer, he started his musical studies relatively late. As both the director of the Singakademie and the teacher of Felix Mendelssohn, he helped to spark a revival of J.S. Bach's works. Zelter composed approximately 200 lieder and balladen. Though most of these settings were simple and strophic, his more adventurous works allowed for increased freedom in the piano that acts at times as an independent partner to the voice. He was a close friend of Goethe, and Goethe referred to Zelter as his “musical advisor.”⁵²

Johann Rudolf Zumsteeg (1760–1802) took the new ballad form much further than Zelter. His compositions became models of the new ballad genre which many later composers, including Loewe, would follow. His ballads were through-composed and full of dramatic effects. His setting of Bürger’s *Leonore* is a staggering 950 measures in several different musical styles, including “recitative, simple song, arioso, and dramatic piano interludes.”⁵³ His extended setting of the ballad text and use of the piano to illustrate musical effects greatly influenced Carl Loewe. Zumsteeg’s ballads were still harmonically very much in the Classical idiom, but the expanded and sectional form and his treatment of the piano created the basis for the Romantic art ballad.

The art ballad as developed by Carl Loewe was much more dramatic in the conception of the vocal melody and piano accompaniment. No other ballad composer

⁵² Plantinga, *Romantic Music: A History of Musical Style in Nineteenth-Century Music*, 110–112.

⁵³ Plantinga, *Romantic Music: A History of Musical Style in Nineteenth-Century Music*, 115.

achieved such a high level of artistic accomplishment as Loewe.⁵⁴ His setting of *Erlkönig* has widely been acknowledged as perhaps his best and most important work, and led to his reputation as the “Schubert of the North.”⁵⁵ He relied on his interpretation of the text and poet’s intention to create the motives, harmonies, form, and tonal structure in each of his art ballads. “A superb storyteller, he capitalized on the dramatic content of the ballad in such a compelling fashion that the listener is totally drawn into the tale he tells.”⁵⁶

In his early works, Loewe primarily focused his attentions on texts of Nordic legends or supernatural topics by well-known poets like Goethe, Herder, and Uhland.⁵⁷ Later on, Loewe turned to historical ballads by less significant poets, in part because ballad writing had gone out of fashion.⁵⁸

Loewe elevated the piano accompaniment to a new level of importance, giving it equal weight to the singer. The piano was often used to depict other characters and psychological states. He aimed to bring stories to life through music, not just express a general sentiment. The music for each section, therefore, varied depending on the character, the actions unfolding in the text, and the mood. He used accents, dissonances, and modulations freely to provide more depth and meaning to the text. He used small motives (similar to Wagner’s leitmotif) to create individual sounds and moods for the different characters and scenes presented in the text. Indeed, Wagner was a great admirer of Loewe’s work, and is reported to have referred to him as a “genius” (in reference to *Edward*, Op. 1,

⁵⁴ Landau, *The Lied: The Unfolding of its Style*, 63.

⁵⁵ James Deaville, “The Lied at mid century”, 147.

⁵⁶ Landau, *The Lied: The Unfolding of its Style*, 232.

⁵⁷ Rufus Hallmark, *German Lieder in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 183.

⁵⁸ James Deaville, “The Lied at mid century,” 148.

no. 1).⁵⁹ He preferred Loewe's setting of *Erlkönig* above all of the many others.⁶⁰

Commenting on Loewe's *Erlkönig*, Rufus Hallmark wrote, "Without much preparation and experimentation, Loewe reveals himself here as a master of the form, overcoming the limitations of his predecessors in the art of ballad composition."⁶¹

⁵⁹ Bach, *The Art Ballad, Loewe and Schubert*, 11.

⁶⁰ Charles Osborne, *The Concert Song Companion: A Guide to the Classical Repertoire* (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1974), 51.

⁶¹ Hallmark, *German Lieder in the Nineteenth Century*, 182.

CHAPTER 3: LOEWE'S COMPOSITIONAL STYLE

Carl Loewe composed approximately 150 ballads in his lifetime, and was an innovator in many aspects of his compositional style. Most of these ballads were composed for his own concert performances, playing the piano as he sang. Loewe's interest in Volkslied tradition and the spirit of German nationalism, combined with his uniquely detailed and suggestive writing style, resulted in powerful scenes evinced in his ballads. The piano accompaniment played an important role in the effects he could achieve. Aldrich wrote, "He uses the instrument to enhance the vivid power of the song, in supplying color and pictorial effect of background, in gaining contrasts of light and shadow; and especially in affording relief and variety, and intensifying the poetical significance of that strophic repetition of melody that we have noted as a characteristic feature of Loewe's ballads."⁶² Although the ballads are written for just solo voice and piano, it is readily apparent from the piano accompaniment that Loewe envisioned an orchestral sound. This commanding use of piano accompaniment is seen in *Erlkönig*, *Heinrich der Vogler*, and *Archibald Douglas*.

It is no wonder that Wagner was an admirer of Loewe's compositions. Loewe felt the importance of creating each melody so that it represented the most accurate expression of meaning. Loewe carefully married the music with the text to create many different motives which were subsequently used to represent and individualize characters, scenes, and moods.

⁶² Richard Aldrich, "Carl Loewe: A Critical Note" from *Carl Loewe: Twelve Songs and Ballads* (New York: G. Schirmer, 1903), v–vi.

These small motives pervade the entire work, and are a significant hallmark of Loewe's compositional style. Although the motives transform through the different harmonies, rhythms, and contexts in which they are heard, each motive can easily be found, embedded in the foreground and background of the piece. The motives are often composed into the overarching key schemes. Loewe's studies of Zumsteeg's ballads pulled him towards the use of motives as a primary factor in his own ballad composition. Loewe said, "The music of this old and unjustly slighted master always deeply moved me. Its motives are characteristic and ingenious." He continued, "I fancy that [his] music ought to be more dramatic, and should have been worked out with more fully elaborated motives."⁶³

Loewe's free approach to form lends itself well to the lengthy ballad texts. Rather than forcing the text into traditional classical forms, he allows the text to dictate the formal design of his ballads. His compositions thus tend to be very sectional, often jumping from one section to the next with unprepared key changes. He uses these surprising modulations to sharply change scenes or situational mood or atmosphere.

Other compositional markers that are indicative of Loewe's style are found in the vocal melody. Loewe was not fond of what he considered unnecessary repetition of text that was common in arias and vocal works even just a generation before his time. Consequently, his vocal settings are generally syllabic. His predilection toward longer ballads makes sense with this style of approach to storytelling and text setting.

Loewe exhibits a tendency toward descriptive markings in the score that give explicit instructions as to the character and mood that he envisioned, such as "mit unterdrücktem

⁶³ Quoted in Albert Bernhard Bach, *The Art Ballad, Loewe and Schubert* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd., 1897), 63.

Zorn; abgestossen" (with oppressed wrath; repelled) in *Archibald Douglas* and "Heimlich flüsternd und lockend" (secretly whisper and lure) in *Erlkönig*. The piano accompaniment is given equal weight to the vocal line, and plays a large role in telling the story. The accompaniment goes far beyond harmonic support or setting a general mood for the singer to tell his tale. He makes use of text painting, usually in the piano accompaniment, to enhance the picture he is painting in the audience's imagination. Loewe composes the details of the scene so skillfully that the sounds of birds chirping, horses galloping, or running water do not seem contrived, but impossibly real. The piano often telegraphs the mood and foreshadows things to come.

The performative difficulties derive not only from the technical demands placed on both the vocalist and the pianist, but also from the intricate nuances of expression and meaning behind the pervasive motives. Loewe's compositions often make use of a wide range for the voice with syllabic writing, making the text as clear as possible. The greatest challenge to the singer lies in the difficulty of control and the demands especially at the upper end of voice. His compositions often call for light singing in the high range for extended periods and full singing in the low range. The music also demands that the singer easily and quickly move between extreme ranges. Loewe seems to have had an exceptional range of voice, easily spanning more than two octaves, with the tessitura of the modern-day high baritone. He must have had remarkable control over the full span of his instrument.

Music critic Anthony Tommasini praised Loewe's settings of both *Erlkönig* and *Archibald Douglas* in a New York Times review of a concert given by Hermann Prey, commenting on the "swirling colors, driving rhythms and Lisztian flourishes of Loewe's demanding accompaniments", noting "Loewe's skills as a dramatist were backed by

compositional know-how.”⁶⁴ In his autobiography, Loewe writes, “My compositions demand a master on the piano, a great vocalist with clear pronunciation and declamation; if the singer has these requisites at command, the spirit of the composition will soon wing its upward flight.”⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Anthony Tommassini, “The Songs of Carl Loewe.” *New York Times Music Review*, Jan 11, 1996; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times pg. H18.

⁶⁵ Quoted in Bach, *The Art Ballad, Loewe and Schubert*, 13.

CHAPTER 4: *ERLKÖNIG*, OP. 1 NO. 3

Composed in 1818 and published in 1824, *Erlkönig* is the third piece in Loewe's first opus. This collection of three ballads included *Edward* (op. 1 no. 1), *Der Wirtin Töchterlein* (op. 1 no. 2), and *Erlkönig* (op. 1 no. 3). *Erlkönig* was by far one of Loewe's most popular and favored compositions. After a concert in 1844, Loewe wrote in a letter to his wife, "I have reason to be not a little proud of the signal effect my *Erlkönig* has produced, seeing that the Vienna public have, so to speak, grown up with Schubert's setting of the poem. The pleasure which the friends of art take in my compositions and singing cannot be told in words."⁶⁶ Wagner also thought very highly of Loewe's setting of *Erlkönig*, and is reported to have said to his students, "My young friends, you think Schubert's *Erlkönig* to be the best. Listen! Here is one much finer; it is that by Loewe."⁶⁷ Loewe's ballad makes use of both micro and macro level details to musically depict the scene laid out by Goethe in this extraordinary setting of *Der Erlkönig*.

⁶⁶ Quoted in Albert Bernhard Bach. *The Art Ballad, Loewe and Schubert* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd., 1897), 82.

⁶⁷ Bach. *The Art Ballad, Loewe and Schubert*, 131.

Overview

Der Erlkönig was written by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe in 1782. The action of this ballad is relayed through dialogue between the three characters, framed by an opening and closing stanza told by a narrator. The story commences with the narrator describing a father with his son, riding late in the night. The boy is ill and is frightened by the Erlkönig, a supernatural being whom only the boy can see, who attempts to lure the boy to come with him. The father tries to calm his son and rationalize the child's visions, but upon arrival at their destination he discovers that his child is dead.

Though the reason for their journey at the start of the poem is unclear, the first stanza of text extends a feeling of foreboding, especially with the last line, “Er faßt ihn sicher, er hält ihn warm” (He holds him safe, he keeps him warm). The Erlkönig can be interpreted either as a supernatural being or as the imaginings of a delirious child on the brink of death. He tempts the boy with bright and cheerful imagery, describing scenes of “bunte Blumen” (colorful flowers), “gülden Gewand” (golden robe), and “wiegen und tanzen und singen” (rock and dance and sing). The Erlkönig also speaks with internal rhyme, making his comments to the boy all the more alluring. A great example is in the third and fourth lines of the fifth stanza –

“Meine Töchter führen den nächtlichen Reihn,
Und wiegen und tanzen und singen dich ein.”

The minor second interval is the most important and pervasive motive in Loewe's setting of this ballad. Loewe immediately begins the piece with D and C♯ alternating. The

bass line dips down to F♯ and immediately begins a pattern of minor 2nds resolving upwards (leading tones). This upward resolution of minor 2nds is contrasted at the end by the descending “resolution” of the B – B♭ half step to the tonic key of G minor. The B– B♭ half step is important, as G minor is representative of the human world and G major is representative of the supernatural world.

Characters: Father, Boy, Erlkönig

Loewe differentiates between the three characters by using specialized ranges, dynamics, and writing styles that are distinctive to each character. The Erlkönig’s melodic line is lilting and folk-like, using only the G Major triad, and is marked *sotto voce*. The boy’s line is marked *piano* and is in a *recitative* style. It is comprised of mostly eighth notes moving in conjunct motion and contained within a very small interval towards the upper range of the voice. The father’s *arioso* melodic line is marked *mezzo-forte* and has much more variety of movement, incorporating both conjunct and disjunct motions.

The boy’s melodic line is encompassed within the tritone C♯4 to G4, but is centered around D4. This correlates to the opening chord, G minor with the C♯-D tremolo. The father’s line encompasses a tenth, from B2 to D4. The Erlkönig’s range is nestled within the father’s range, an octave from D3 to D4 with one final rise to Eb4 for his final note. This similarity in range between the father and the Erlkönig musically represents the two opposing father figures in the poem.

The piano accompaniment also plays a role in depicting the different characters. The Erlkönig’s triadic melody is doubled in the tenor line of the piano. The line is coupled with

an ethereal tremolo and lacks any harmonic progression, playing only the G major chord.

This gives an overall effect of peace and stability.

Erlkönig, mm. 30-33.

The father's arioso melody is often doubled in the bass, creating an active harmonic progression. Because the tremolo figure in the upper voice outlines this progression, the constant harmonic motion creates a feeling of anxiety.

Erlkönig, mm. 62-64.

The son's *recitative* lines are coupled with the piano line moving in contrary motion. The contrary motion produces the feeling that an outside force is working against the boy, and creates the illusion of stagnation.

Erlkönig, mm. 37-38.

Musical Analysis

The father's first entrance mimics the narrator's opening, with his question to the child mirroring the narrator's question to the audience. He always repeats his assurances twice, often ending first with a deceptive cadence, followed by a quieter iteration of the phrase. This hints that he does not believe his own explanation when he first attempts to calm the child's fears, then repeats himself attempting to calm his own.

Erlkönig, mm. 21-25.

Erlkönig's first entrance is marked "Heimlich flüsternd und lockend" (secretly whispering and luring) with subsequent entrances marked *sotto voce*. The piano is always marked *pianissimo*, *una corda*, and *tremolo* with a long pedal marking. Loewe combines these to give the effect of an ethereal haze. He writes grace notes into the vocal line, producing a seductive sliding sound. When the Erlkönig gets to the end of each of his stanzas, Loewe writes in a decrescendo, as if the ghostly specter is drifting away.

Erlkönig, mm. 26-29.

The boy's melody gets wider in range and increasingly more agitated as the ballad progresses. He starts with the vocal line contained within the interval of a minor second. The piano left hand has a tremolo and right hand alternates chords. His second stanza is comprised within a third, with voice-crossing (from the piano) in his range, acting like two forces pulling against each other. His vocal line now includes dotted rhythms, adding an air of urgency. This, coupled with the father's response in a totally unrelated key (E minor), builds uncertainty. His final statement is contained within a fourth, but extends to reach a fifth and octave for the first and last notes, respectively. This final phrase strays from his usual *recitative* style, and becomes lyrical towards the end. The *forte* F#'s and G's at the top of the singer's register give the impression of the child screaming, and the lyrical melody following in a downward motion has an air of sadness.



Erlkönig, mm. 75-77.

The boy always shares a stanza with another character. Though he shares the first two stanzas with the father, their key relationships within each section become increasingly distant as the ballad progresses. The father's first statement is firmly in G minor; the son's melodic content, however, is more ambiguous as to the key since he only sings a minor second, C#-D with alternating D minor and Eb augmented sixth chords in the piano. The augmented sixth chord resolving to D minor (rather than to D Major as would be expected) gives a sense of dread and foreboding. The second stanza that they share is clearly not in the same key. Now the child is in G minor, and the father replies in E minor. The final stanza is shared between the Erlkönig and the child. Although the Erlkönig begins singing in G major, he eventually ends in G minor, the same key as the child.

The Erlkönig's character is the foil to the Father. While the Erlkönig's text is bright, the father's descriptions are much darker – “nebelstreif” (streak of fog), “dürren blättern säuselt” (rustling dry leaves), and “die alten weiden so grau” (the old willows so gray). Throughout the poem, the father and son share stanzas while the Erlkönig has his own stanza. This holds true until the third and final time the Erlkönig tries to lure the boy to him. This time the Erlkönig shares his stanza with the boy, suggesting the Erlkönig has replaced the father and taken the child for himself. The key relationships between the Erlkönig and father also depict the Erlkönig's desire to replace the Father. The Father's opening key of G minor

is met by the Erlkönig in G major, a parallel key relationship. The Father's key area following this is in E minor, the relative minor of G major. Finally the Erlkönig ends in G minor, the Father's original key, taking the boy away with him.

Stanza	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Narrator	gm							gm
Father		gm		em		em		
Child		[gm]		gm		gm	gm	
Erlkönig			GM		GM		GM-gm	

Loewe uses the music for character development. As the ballad progresses, the child's level of distress increases, which is shown musically by his increasing melodic range. The first time the child sings, the melody is completely contained within a minor 2nd. The second and third time within a 3rd, and the final time within a 4th. The boy's melodic line typically has an upward motion countered by a downward pull in the piano, until the child's final statement. His final statement shows not only a downward trajectory, but also a dramatic jump in dynamic to *forte* and back to *piano*.

Loewe uses the change in meter between 6/8 and 9/8 to further differentiate between the three characters and their situation. The boy and Father sing their first stanza in 9/8, and the meter changes to 6/8 when the Erlkönig sings, creating a lilting, dance-like atmosphere. The meter returns to 9/8 at the end of his stanza. The second time the Erlkönig sings, however, the meter doesn't change back to 6/8, but stays in 9/8. His music has the same

number of measures as the first time he sings (ten measures), but because of the meter, his second stanza lasts for a longer period of time (eight extra beats). This expansion of time gives the listener the impression that the Erlkönig has the luxury of time, and is in no rush to go anywhere. In the final stanza shared by the Erlkönig and the boy, Loewe changes the meter of the boy's final screams to 6/8. This change creates the feeling that time is running out, and gives the listener a final push of anxiety before the end is revealed.

The use of light versus dark in the music is unmistakable between the Erlkönig and the boy. For example, in the passage below, the constant tremolo remains, but the context in which we hear it changes. The tremolo for the Erlkönig provides an ethereal and inviting effect, as if in a dream. The shift of the tremolo to the middle voice in the piano, sudden key change with just one note, and *tutte corde* with dry pedal all combine to immediately shift the total effect from a feeling of peace to one of restlessness and anxiety.

Musical score for 'Erlkönig' showing piano and vocal parts. The vocal line (top) has lyrics: "Mut - ter hat manch gül-den Ge - wand." and "„Mein Va - - ter, mein Va - - ter, und hö - rest du nicht, was". The piano part (bottom) features a tremolo in the first section and a dynamic change to *p* with *tutte corde* in the second section. The score is in 8/8 time.

Erlkönig, mm. 34-38.

Another example of light versus dark comes from the same rhythm associated with the frantic galloping of the horse used later in association with the dancing of the Erlkönig's daughters. The figure is first heard in a fearful context, following the Father's repeated statements to the boy. The same figure is then used by the Erlkönig to describe the fun the boy could have with his daughters, and it is heard in the context of childish innocence in an other-worldly soft haze. Loewe takes the contrast further, and begins the final narration with this figure and the image of the Father furiously galloping, in G minor now.



Erlkönig, m. 56.



Erlkönig, m. 81.

Special Details

Loewe constructs minute details into the music to highlight important words in the text and to telegraph thoughts beyond the general atmosphere to the listener. The opening stanza sung by the narrator is rife with these little details. While the singer is setting the scene with the opening narration, the piano is summarizing the story. We can hear the wind and the horse combined with fear and foreboding. Loewe gives clues to the outcome of the story

throughout the first narration. As the narrator reveals that the rider is in fact a father with his child, Loewe accents “Vater” and emphasizes this by taking away the tremolo motion for the only time until the end of the piece. Although these two bars sound triumphant, Loewe foreshadows that perhaps this is not the case through the sudden decrease in dynamic in the piano accompaniment (*mezzo-forte*) when the singer accents “Vater”.

Erlkönig, mm. 5-7

Loewe makes a rhythmic alteration, a unique occurrence, on the word “sicher” (safe) in measure 10. Rather than using the quarter plus eighth note rhythm that is pervasive through the rest of the song, on this one occasion he writes two eighth notes in a row. The rhythm stirs a sense of urgency, and suggests that there is a chance that the child is not safe. This last line of text, “er faßt ihn sicher, er hält ihn warm” (he holds him safe, he keeps him warm) ends with a deceptive cadence and is again repeated. The repetition of text combined with the deceptive cadence produces a sense of foreboding, and Loewe hints that perhaps the Father was not able to keep the boy safe.

The musical score consists of two staves. The top staff is for the voice (soprano) and the bottom staff is for the piano. The vocal line starts with 'Arm,' followed by 'er faßt ihn si - cher, er hält ihn'. The piano accompaniment consists of eighth-note patterns. The key signature changes from G minor to E minor (sharp) in the second stanza.

Erlkönig, mm. 9-12

In the second stanza shared by the son and father (m. 37-46), the dotted rhythms reveal the child's heightened anxiety and the increased urgency of his situation. The resulting feeling of dread is augmented by the voice-crossing from the piano, giving a gravitational pull. This, coupled with the father's statements in a different and totally unrelated key builds uncertainty and creates an uneasy atmosphere. Loewe modulates to E minor (#vi of G minor) using the common tones of the last E_b sung by the child ("verspricht") and the D_# leading tone of the new key. This time, the father's reassurance does not include a deceptive cadence first, and the tenor and bass line of the piano move more quickly, ending with a galloping motion. The overall effect is of the father who believes his son may be in real danger and is urging his horse to move faster, ending in a gallop.

Er - len - kö - nig mir lei - se ver - spricht? „Sei ru - hig,
blei - be ru - hig, mein Kind, in dür - - ren Blät - tern säu - selt der

Erlkönig, mm. 39-43.

Directly following this, in measure 47, is the addition of the E_b to the D dominant 7 chord (creating a dominant 9th chord) that serves as the short transition into the Erlkönig's stanza each time. This directly outlines the Erlkönig's full range, D-E_b, and foreshadows the explosive moment when the Erlkönig sings this top note.

Erlkönig, m. 47.

The Erlkönig Takes the Child

The Erlkönig begins his final ploy towards the boy with his usual lilting song. As he continues singing, his melody becomes increasingly agitated until he cannot contain himself any longer. He explodes with the word “Gewalt” (violence) and reaches a minor 2nd above his D-D octave range. The piano first relates to the audience that something is about to happen when the accompaniment abruptly changes harmony to G minor in the middle of the Erlkönig’s song (at the beginning of bar 74), before the Erlkönig changes key.

Erlkönig, mm. 74-75.

The child screams out to his father in a *forte* dynamic, “Mein Vater, mein Vater, jetzt faßt er mich an,” (My father, my father, now he takes me), sounding like a frightened scream. As he continues, his voice gets softer and softer, fading to nothing as he repeats “Erlkönig hat mir ein Leids getan” (Erlkönig has hurt me so). The accents on the upper neighbor note E_b for the word “Leids” emphasize the boy’s suffering even more as the long *decrescendo* shows his weakening state. The piano accents the weak beats, disrupting the regular feel of the galloping motion and causing rhythmic turbulence. The continuing *forte* dynamic in the accompaniment indicates that the horse is not stopping, and the accents suggest that perhaps the father is urging the horse forward.

Erlkönig, mm. 75-77.

As the son fades away, the Narrator takes over the remainder of the story. The *subito fortissimo* combined with the galloping motion and accents in the bass of the piano conjures the image of the father pressing the horse to ride faster. The vocal line emphasizes the words “grauet’s” (shudders), “schwind” (fast), and “Not” (distress), adding extra urgency to the already precarious situation laid out by the piano. The unpredictable harmonic progression further destabilizes the key and increases the tension to a hair-raising level.

Erlkönig, mm. 81-83.

This accumulation of drama and intensity followed by a sudden cease of motion results in a heart-stopping moment. Even now, as the next three chords are sounded (mm. 90-91), the tension is relentless. Although the chords decrease in harmonic tension (D major sus, D major, D unison), the effect on the audience is exactly the opposite. The chords are without

tremolo. The first contains a 4-3 suspension that literally suspends time. The rests between each word, practically whispered, “das … Kind … war …”, the piano holding a single D long past the singer, and “war” sung all alone followed by silence create a chilling effect that forces the audience to lean forward in their seats to await the conclusion. This is the most special and critical moment of the whole ballad – a result of all of the compositional choices and details leading to this last phrase, setting an atmosphere thick with anxiety and finally dread as the inevitable outcome is revealed.



Erlkönig, mm. 90-91.

The Erlkönig’s sinking half step B – B \flat and his change from G major to minor is prominently used for the last chords in the piano. The singer finally sings “Tot” (dead) on a B with a B fully diminished 7 chord in the piano accompanying it. This B belongs to the sound world of the Erlkönig, signifying that the boy is now with the Erlkönig. The short piano postlude ends with a G major chord descending to a G minor chord, paralleling the end of the Erlkönig’s final stanza and presenting the supernatural and human sound worlds side by side.



Erlkönig, mm. 92-95.

Conclusion

Erlkönig is an impressive feat for a young composer's first published opus. Of the many composers who have attempted to set this text to music, Loewe best captured the suspense and dread necessary to fully deliver and realize the story. Each character has their own very distinct voice, and the piano and voice work together to bring each character to life. It is evident from this ballad that Loewe found his characteristic personal style early on. His use of one motive woven throughout unifies the different song styles (folk, *recitative* and *arioso*) and separate sections to create a cohesive ballad. Loewe includes special details that add even more sophistication to his text setting. The compositional techniques presented here will remain hallmarks of Loewe's style for the rest of his life.

CHAPTER 5: *HEINRICH DER VOGLER*, OP. 56 NO. 1

Johann Nepomuk Vogl (1802–1866) often used historical legends and folklore to compose his ballads.⁶⁸ His ballad *Heinrich der Vogler* tells the story of how in 919 A.D., Heinrich, the Duke of Saxony, became the King of Germany and first king of the Saxon dynasty. Legend holds that he was setting bird nets for his hunt when he was informed that he had been elected king, thus acquiring the name “Henry the Fowler.”⁶⁹ The story was written in such a way to uplift political ideals at the time, depicting Henry the Fowler as a man of the people.

Loewe set this ballad to music in April of 1836. He used the piano accompaniment to convey a multitude of emotions and create dramatic tension. A quick glance at the ballad may suggest a carefree song without much difficulty to the singer or pianist; closer examination, however, reveals extraordinary thought in crafting the key scheme, interval usage, and the relationship between singer and pianist. Even with a simple compositional approach, Loewe manages to extract maximum drama and range of emotion.

⁶⁸ *The Great Soviet Encyclopedia, 3rd Edition.* S.v. "Vogl, Johann Nepomuk." Retrieved August 21, 2018 from <https://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/Vogl%2c+Johann+Nepomuk>

⁶⁹ *The New Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. 5 (Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2005), 845.

Overview

The composition is divided into three distinct sections. The opening, marked *Andante comodo*, has a light-hearted quality with the feeling of a folk song. The simple melody contained within a small range, simple harmonic progression and, above all, the strong-weak pairing of syllabic stress provide the folk-song feel. Each bar contains two pairs of strong-weak syllables, with the downbeat containing the strongest syllabic stress for each measure. For example, the first line, “Herr Heinrich sitzt am Vogelherd, recht froh und wohlgemuth” has a syllabic stress of [U – U – U – U – U – U – U –], where U is unstressed, – is stressed. So the stressed syllables in the text are –

Herr Heinrich sitzt am Vogelherd, recht froh und wohlgemuth.

Andante comodo.

Op. 56 Nr. 1.
Componirt im „April 1836“

Herr Heinrich sitzt am Vogelherd, recht froh und wohlgemuth; aus

Heinrich der Vogler, mm. 1-4.

The second section is in a new meter, 6/8, and is marked *Allegro*. The story is relayed through both the Narrator and Heinrich and there is much interplay between voice and piano. The section begins mysteriously and modulates keys through strong leading tone motion of the dominant V, giving only implications of the tonic key. This section also utilizes the same melodic material from the first section but in the new meter. There is more musical action (dynamics, tension, and key changes) which corresponds to the heightened dramatic action in the text. The third section, marked *Tempo I, con espressione*, is comprised of just two phrases. The opening melodic material is restated, but the second phrase is composed in a chorale style.

Interestingly, there are no piano introductions to any of the sections in this piece. The singer and pianist always begin and cadence each section together. The starting and ending of both the piano and voice together is very reminiscent of folk or nationalistic songs.

The two important motives in this ballad are the ascending and descending movement of the 3rd interval (motive A) and the interval of the 4th (motive B). The opening line presents both motives – the voice has an ascending then descending 3rd followed by an inverted motion of the interval, and the piano adds an ascending 4th at the end of the first bar.



|----- motive A -----|



|-- motive B--|

The key scheme also reflects these motives.

E ----- A ----- (c#) ----- E ----- G ----- E

The overarching keys are E-A-E, a 4th up and down. The modulation to G Major and back to E Major adds the ascending and descending 3rd.

Musical Analysis

Loewe's setting of the opening section is reminiscent of a folk song. The simple melody, pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables, and lack of dynamics all contribute to this feel. This use of folk style contributes to the characterization of Heinrich, making him seem like an ordinary person, relatable to the audience and in line with the idea of him being a man of the people. As is characteristic of his writing, Loewe also makes use of a lot of text painting. In the opening section he uses overt text painting in the piano accompaniment to set the scene for a happy day's hunt. The piano mimics the motion of sunrise with ascending arpeggios to depict "Morgenröthe Gluth" (dawn glow). The piano then plays a 6th above the voice when the text introduces the sound of birds, adding trills and rolls, giving the impression of birds singing overhead.



Heinrich der Vogler, m. 10-18.

The piano interlude continues to illustrate the text of this phrase –

“In Wies’ und Feld, in Wald und Au,
 Horch, welch ein süßer Schall!
 Der Lerche Sang der Wachtel Schlag,
 Die süsse Nachtigall!”

(“In field and meadow, wood and glade,
 Just listen to those sweet sounds!
 The lark’s song, the quail’s call,
 The sweet voice of the nightingale!”)

The interlude allows the piano accompaniment to go beyond simple text painting and actually become a physical manifestation of the birds singing in the forest. The static dynamic level in this entire first section speaks to the single emotion (carefree contentment) and simplicity being expressed.

The second section is considerably different from the first. The quicker and more interesting harmonic motion is combined with more dynamic variety, heightening the dramatic action in the text. The tempo change and metric ambiguity at the outset convey the confusion and anxiety that Heinrich experiences in this section. This sudden metric change coupled with the ambiguous harmonic motion immediately creates suspense. The first words, “Er lauscht” (he listens), are translated directly into the music. The vocalist sings in hushed tones and pauses to listen as the piano echoes. The crescendo as he says “Ei doch!” communicates his growing consternation. Motive A is noticeably absent from this part of the second section.

11

Allegro.

lauscht, er lauscht, und streicht sich von der Stirn das

cresc.

blond ge lock - te Haar.— „Ei doch! ei doch! was

cresc.

Heinrich der Vogler, m. 29-36.

The following phrase poses Heinrich's question, "Was sprengt den dort herauf für eine Reiterschar?" (What horsemen are these galloping up so fast?⁷⁰) The compression of this phrase in the vocal line as compared to the phrase previous (three measures now as opposed

⁷⁰ Richard Stokes trans., *The Book of Lieder* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 2005), 183.

to four) illustrates the charging horses and creates an atmosphere of breathless anticipation.

The one measure cadential extension in the piano accompaniment following the conclusion of the vocal phrase continues the suspense without any resolution. This leads directly into the surprising new key of A Major, not F♯ Major as expected after the repeated C♯ dominant chords.



Heinrich der Vogler, m. 37-40.

The new phrase uses accents and *sforzandi* on top of a *forte* dynamic and long pedals, creating a huge sound to portray the narration, “Der Staub wallt auf, der Hufschlag dröhnt, Es naht der Waffen Klang.” (Dust billows, hooves drum, The clank of arms draws near.⁷¹) This is composed using the same melodic material from the opening line (motive A), but in the new key and meter. The use of motive A for the narration of the horsemen after it was purposefully omitted now conveys the same cheerful emotion from the opening, and leads the audience to conclude that the horsemen do not intend harm.

⁷¹ Richard Stokes trans., *The Book of Lieder*, 183.

Heinrich der Vogler, m. 41-44.

Loewe immediately changes the mood after this triumphant heralding of the horsemen. The sudden modulation to C# minor, the drop in dynamic, and the sparse staccato accompaniment leave the voice open and vulnerable. The combination of these elements create a musical expression of Heinrich's anxiety. His sudden outburst, "Ei nun! Was giebt's" (Now what is this!), is depicted in the piano's loud and sharp chords. The accompaniment begins a slow build, creating anticipation, as Heinrich confronts the horsemen. Loewe again creates a noisy atmosphere for the exultation of the troops. The climax to the story occurs at the end of this section, "'s ist deutschen Reiches Will!'" ("The German Empire wills it!"). The fermata following this proclamation is on the rest rather than the last piano chord, a final moment of suspense created by the accompaniment.

The third and final section begins with the same melodic material as the opening phrase. The absence of sixteenth notes in the accompaniment produces a calmer effect than in the first section. The final line is composed in chorale style, demonstrating Heinrich's praise to God. The whole section is composed with an air of reverence.

Heinrich der Vogler, m. 77-81.

Loewe's prevalent use of 4ths relays the importance of Heinrich's position. 4ths are first introduced in this ballad when describing the dawn, bird sounds, and sky in the first section (motive B). This interval is not used again until Heinrich says, "Das Gott!" (Dear God!) Similarly, then, when the troops proclaim, "Unsern Herrn!" (Our Master!), motive B is used. These images – the dawn and the birds flying through the sky – are things that are controlled by God. Using the same interval for Heinrich assumes that he is ascending to the throne because of God's will. Additionally, the troop's proclamation is composed in A Major, a secondary key area that is a 4th above the opening key, E Major. This modulation depicts his ascent. To show that Heinrich is still deferential to God, the final statement he makes, ("Herr Gott, wie dir's gefällt!", Lord God, as it pleaseth Thee!)⁷² is a larger interval, a 6th for Herr Gott.

As is common in Loewe's compositions, he leads the audience through the story and arrives at a special moment in the musical setting of the text. Towards the end of the second section, the tonicization of G Major is a unique moment that captures Loewe's mastery of

⁷² Stokes, Richard trans. *The Book of Lieder* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 2005) 184.

combining the scene, atmosphere, and text in the music. As the narrator says, “Sich neigend knien sie vor ihm hin, Und huldigen ihm still” (They bow and kneel before him, And pay him silent homage.⁷³), the dynamic drops suddenly to *piano*, corresponding to the “silent homage” being paid to Heinrich. The key of G is a step below the key of A (which we can call Heinrich’s key), and musically depicts bowing before the king.

Heinrich der Vogler, m. 61-68.

Conclusion

Composed in the middle period of his life, Loewe’s setting of Heinrich der Vogler clearly shows the folk and nationalistic influences popular at the time. Though there is limited dialogue in this ballad, Loewe reveals character intentions through the music. He

⁷³ Richard Stokes trans., *The Book of Lieder*, 184.

artfully pulls the audience into vivid scenes and a range of emotions even with this simplistic writing. Loewe embeds the two prominent motives into both the foreground and the background key scheme. He continues to write in a Classical idiom, but moving into his later years, the influence of late Romantic chromaticism is manifested in his writing.

CHAPTER 6: *ARCHIBALD DOUGLAS*, OP. 128

Loewe's realization of *Archibald Douglas* is one of the great triumphs of the Romantic ballad in music literature. Composed in 1857, this expansive work is the pinnacle of his mature style. Nearly eleven minutes in length, it rivals piano balladen in size and tests the singer's endurance. Though it is highly sectional, the ballad stays together as a whole through Loewe's use of two distinct motives that are threaded throughout the piece. The piano accompaniment adds color, drama, and character commentary. *Archibald Douglas* is truly a testament to Loewe's ability to create a "miniature musical drama."

Overview

This ballad by Theodore Fontane features the Scottish nobleman and 6th Earl of Angus, Archibald Douglas. It is a romanticized version of the historical account between King James V of Scotland and Archibald Douglas (King James' stepfather). In the poem, the King (renamed King Jakob) and Douglas make peace with each other and ride off to Linlithgow Palace to live happily ever after. Historical accounts, however, record that

Archibald Douglas was not allowed to return from his exile until the death of King James V, when his titles were restored by Henry VIII of England.⁷⁴

There are five large sections that constitute Loewe's setting of this ballad. These larger sections can each be imagined as a short theatrical scene and are clearly marked with a change in tempo, meter, or key. The Narrator, Archibald Douglas, and King James are the three main characters presented. As is usual in his works, Loewe uses the piano to create the atmosphere and mood for each section. Loewe writes many detailed instructions for both the voice and piano, explicitly indicating what kind of character should be portrayed. The descriptions not only indicate the desired vocal quality for that section, but also the nature of the character. Loewe also writes very specific dynamic markings with lots of accents and *sforzandi*.

The opening figure, comprised of a tritone and resolution (motive A), is one of the main motives of the piece, and is especially prevalent in its complete form in Section I (specifically mm. 1-35). Two of the individual components of motive A (the tritone and descending half step) are also used throughout the ballad.



The other pervasive motive in this ballad is the descending triplet figure (motive B). Often melismatic, this contrasts the syllabic setting of the rest of the ballad.

⁷⁴ Undiscovered Scotland. "Archibald Douglas, 6th Earl of Angus: Biography." Accessed September 6, 2017. <http://www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk/usbiography/d/archibalddouglasangus.html>.



These motives keep the ballad together as a whole and contribute to character development.

Once more, the important intervallic motives are embedded into the key scheme:

E_b --- F --- G --- g --- g# --- a --- (b_b --- b --- c ---) E_b --- G

There is a tritone motion from the opening E_b Major key to A minor and back to E_b. The final two keys, E_b Major to G Major is a third. The ascending motion (as opposed to the descending motion of the original motive) reveals the positive outcome of the story.

Musical Analysis

Section I (m. 1 – 51): The Introduction

The sparse piano opening of bass octaves immediately sets a tone of uncertainty and suspense. The *Grave* marking describes more than just the tempo, but also the heavy character of the text. Loewe further instructs the singer to use *Tiefe Stimme* (deep voice) to characterize Archibald Douglas. This short piano introduction strongly implies the key of G minor, and the repeated F# in the vocal line at the end of the fourth measure further reinforces the G minor key. The introductory phrase seemingly ends with a deceptive cadence to E_b major, but the following measures reveal that E_b major is in fact the tonic key. This change is surprising and lightens the mood, like a weight has been lifted. The increasing motion through the first phrase in the accompaniment illustrate the story slowly starting,

pulling out the tale from a tired old man. The atmosphere created here is a mix of suspense and stoic resolve.

Archibald Douglas, mm. 1-5.

The opening monologue given by Archibald Douglas shows both hope and anxiety. The Eb Major key of the voice and the G minor key of the piano interludes are at odds with each other, and the alternation between the two keys contribute to the mixed mood of suspense and resolve. The accompaniment in this opening monologue feels very resolute when Archibald Douglas sings, yet the interludes expose his hidden anxiety. The voice finally joins the piano with motive A as Douglas says “so komme was da kommen soll, und komme was da mag!” (Then happen what must, and come what may!⁷⁵) Loewe highlights the descending half step with *sforzandi* and accents, different from the opening. He further emphasizes the text “und komme was da mag” by featuring the same notes (Eb and D), this time accentuating the rising half step. He uses a string of descending half steps to modulate

⁷⁵ Richard Stokes trans., *The Book of Lieder* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 2005), 166.

to F major. This upward modulation from E \flat Major to F Major provides an added feeling of hope leading into the end of Section I.

Archibald Douglas, mm. 30-32.

As the narrator takes over the text following the monologue, the piano assumes the role of Archibald Douglas. Loewe employs subtle text painting here to depict Douglas. When the narrator says “Graf Douglas spricht’s” (Count Douglas speaks), the piano answers by speaking. The chords feel weighty and tired, embodying the persona of Archibald Douglas. The sudden shift to *recitative* and the long F pedal point in the piano adds to overall weighty quality of the music here.

Motive A and motive B are combined in the next line. The voice has two iterations of motive A, translated now into F major. The important notes C-B \flat -A construct motive B, outlined again in the piano interlude. Loewe depicts Archibald Douglas drifting off to sleep through both the melody and piano accompaniment. The melody is written much like a lullaby, and the extended F pedal points in different registers in the piano create a rocking feel.

A musical score for 'Archibald Douglas' in G minor. The piano part is in the bass and treble staves, with harmonic patterns and bass notes marked 'rw.' and 'rw.' with a star. The vocal part is in the top staff, singing 'sah in Wald und Feld hin-ein, die Au - - gen fie-len ihm'.

Archibald Douglas, mm. 40-42.

Loewe splits the fifth stanza of text in half and ends the first musical section with a surprising modulation.

Section II (m. 52-93): The Meeting

Leading into the second section, Loewe modulates quickly from D minor to G major through a surprising cadence to D major (V). The predominant interval used in the introduction is the fourth, the third component of motive A. This section includes some of the most evocative piano accompaniment in the whole piece. The lengthy piano introduction builds momentum and compels the audience to listen closely for the approaching action. It begins with a horn call combined with a galloping rhythm, evoking horseback riders. The voice imitates the horn call when it enters. The dizzying piano figurations take center stage as the narrator describes the dust swirling and horsemen driving towards Archibald Douglas. The simple melodic writing for the voice continues the story while giving the attention to the

piano, and Loewe's writing perfectly allows the imagination to envision the scene being created.

Archibald Douglas, mm. 75-77.

The next phrase is another great example of Loewe's ability to musically depict text. The *ritardando* and subsequent *stringendo* musically depict the slow act of Archibald Douglas trying to sit up, countered by the horses quickly riding up towards him.

Archibald Douglas, mm. 83-87.

Loewe has a particular gift in creating tension with simple chords or octaves. The two bars of repeated D octaves cast an incredible amount of suspense preceding the entrance of the King. When King James's character is finally introduced, it seems to start on the Neapolitan chord of D Major (E♭ Major). The following chord progression, however, proves

E♭ to be the tonic chord. Even though this is a similar musical situation from the opening, rather than feeling surprising it now feels triumphant with an explosive upward motion – an introduction fit for a king. The key, lifted a half step from D to E♭, musically depicts the higher status of the new character, King James. This is followed by a traditionally classical harmonic sequence.

The musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is for the voice, the middle staff is for the piano (bass), and the bottom staff is for the piano (treble). The vocal line begins with a melodic line before entering with lyrics. The piano part features a bass line and chords. Dynamics 'dim. rit.' are marked above the vocal line in two places. The lyrics are: König Ja. kob sass auf ho. hem Ross, Graf Dou. glas grüß. te.

Archibald Douglas, mm. 85-88.

Loewe again uses his unique approach to text painting here. The octave leap in the piano combined with the diminuendo and *ritardando* depict Archibald Douglas's low bow before the King. The piano's agitated rhythms in the following few bars then depict the text “dem König das Blut in die Wangen schuss” (blood rushed to the King's face), and even visually on the score the music looks like it is boiling over. The constant crescendo leading to the explosive D major chords allows the audience to experience the King's fury towards his encounter with Archibald Douglas.

Archibald Douglas, mm. 89-91.

Section III (m. 93-172): The Plea

This section begins a dialogue between Archibald Douglas and King James. (Although Loewe doesn't write a double bar line until m. 106, the text belongs together, and m. 95 and m. 106 both share the same introduction.) There are two parts, the first for Archibald Douglas and the second for the King. Both motives A and B are prominently used.

Marked *Andante* and *con molta devozione* (with much devotion), Loewe has transformed the triplet rhythm of motive B to a dotted eighth – sixteenth note pairing. The lingering on the beginning of the motive creates a pleading gesture. He takes this further by instructing the singer to slide down to the last note, B. Motive B is heard four times in this first phrase, and this long descending line imagines Douglas bowing and groveling before King James as he requests mercy.

The musical score is for 'Archibald Douglas' in Andante tempo. The vocal line starts with 'con molta devozione' and 'portando la voce', with lyrics in German. The piano part provides harmonic support with various dynamics and articulations.

Archibald Douglas, mm. 93-97.

Archibald Douglas continues and pleads for the King to remember back to the happier days of his childhood and all of the things they used to do together. In these four stanzas, Loewe uses the same music, repeating it seven times. The melody is simple, using motive B with basic harmonization in the piano and written almost exactly the same way each time. The seventh time, Loewe instructs the singer to sing *mit Hingebung* (with hints). The repeated use of this same melody provides the audience with musical proof that Archibald Douglas has no other motivation than this singular goal – to be forgiven and accepted back into the King's good graces. As Douglas's speech ends, he repeats the same text from his opening monologue, "ich hab'es getragen Sieben Jahr" (I have borne it seven years), but Loewe sets the text differently this time. In the opening, the vocal line rose a half step from F♯ to G. This time, the vocal line descends a half step from D to C♯ and continues with a compressed motive A, C♯-A-C. The piano postlude following this now has a transformed motive A.



Archibald Douglas, mm. 133-134.



Archibald Douglas, mm. 139-140.

After all of this, King James finally speaks, telling Douglas that he refuses to hear his plea. The vocal part is marked *mit unterdrücktem Zorn; abgestossen* (with oppressed wrath; repelled) and is composed in a *secco* and *recitative* style. Loewe's harsh instruction leaves no room to misinterpret King James's state of mind. The descending half step E \flat – D is used over and over in his line. Loewe also inverts this to a descending D – E \flat , further contributing to the stern and weighty feel of the music.

Archibald Douglas, mm. 145-16.

As the King continues, the piano accompaniment again assumes the character of Archibald Douglas and the audience can see and hear both characters in their imagination.

The piano softly plays Archibald Douglas's earlier melody and continues a long descending line through the phrase as King James begins his ascending line. The two lines moving in contrary motion show the disagreement between the two characters. The piano accompaniment is immediately recognizable as Douglas's pleas, and the ascending vocal line now presents King James as an even more commanding figure.

Archibald Douglas, mm. 148-150.

Though the piano begins this phrase well above the vocal line, the piano melody continues its downward motion until it is beneath the vocal line at the end of this phrase.

Archibald Douglas, mm. 153-154.

Loewe concludes Section III with the King James's denouncement of the entire Douglas family. His subsequent exit on a half cadence with D octave triplet figures is

reminiscent of his entrance in Section II. This leaves the audience in suspense as to what might happen next.

Section IV (m. 173-236): The Chase

Similar to the preceding section, Loewe composes one phrase that is then repeated in different keys, ascending by half steps in a series of direct modulations. As King James tries to remove himself from the situation and gallops away from Archibald Douglas, Douglas does his best to stay with the King and continue his appeal. The Narrator informs the audience that the two men are riding uphill, and the half step modulations not only add intensity to the passage, but also depict this uphill climb. The melody and accompaniment here are very simple, though the harmonic motion is quicker than the progression in Section III. The slow uphill climb chromatically through the keys and the contour of the melodic line gives the whole section a weighty feel. The text here talks about the steep road, the heavy armor, and the hot sun, and the music allows the audience to experience this difficult ride.

Ja - kob gab seinem Ross den Sporn, berg. an jetzt ging sein Ritt. Graf

V. A. 1803.

Archibald Douglas, mm. 173-176.

Loewe writes *nachgebend* (compliant/yielding) in the vocal part when Archibald Douglas starts speaking, and consequently shortens the phrases by half. The *stretto* effect of these shorter phrases increase the intensity of this chase as Douglas is breathlessly pushing himself to keep with the King. Loewe transforms and inverts motive A, expanding the half step to a whole step so that the whole motive is now comprised within the interval of a fifth.



Archibald Douglas, mm. 178-179.

Archibald Douglas sounds one final plea, asking King James to deliver him from exile and let him breathe once more the air of his Fatherland as the musical setting suddenly changes. Loewe keeps the arpeggiated triplets in the piano, but now Douglas sings in the style of a nationalistic song or anthem, very fitting for the text. He continues, saying that if he will not be allowed to return, then King James should kill him right there. This last part of his plea, “und lass mich sterben hier” (and let me die here) begins the climax of the entire poem, and Loewe composes into the vocal melody both a flat scale degree 3 and 5. There is also the descending half step from motive A on “sterben” (die)



Archibald Douglas, mm. 219-221.

Loewe creates an electrifying climax in this moment through the collaboration between voice and piano. The piano accompaniment prolongs the suspense and intensity of the situation through short bursts and interludes. The piano begins with a two bar phrase, repeated then by the voice as the Narrator tells us that King James has jumped off his horse. This leads to the chords in mm. 225-228, an alternation between B and B_b with declamatory text sung above it (see next example). The piano repeats these chords an octave higher. This is a jarring and dramatic presentation of the King standing above Archibald Douglas, serving much the same purpose as the D octaves heralding his arrival earlier in the piece. As King James pulls out his sword, Loewe writes accents over each beat with a long *crescendo*, coupled with a *ritardando*. He continues to prolong the drama of the moment by having the piano again repeat the singer's melodic line. In a final flurry of motion, the singer says "aber fallen" (but fall) accompanied by four repeated B octaves, like a bell tolling. Finally, after four more beats of rest, Loewe reveals that the King has not struck down Archibald Douglas, now with four B_b octaves.

The struggle between the B – B_b half step towards the end of this section is played out in both the vocal and piano lines, first highlighted with chords in the piano. It is brought to the forefront through the isolation of the two notes for the last four bars with a diminuendo

leading into the last section of the ballad. Because this half step never resolves, Loewe continues to keep the suspense, and the audience is left to wonder where the story will go next.

Archibald Douglas, mm. 225-227.

Archibald Douglas, mm. 232-236.

Section V (m. 237- end): The Acceptance

The sudden and unprepared modulation to G major is very jarring. This only heightens the trepidation that the audience feels on behalf of Archibald Douglas. This final

section is marked *Allegro con majestà*, and indeed the rising melody coupled with decreasing note value feels very majestic and triumphant. Loewe uses the same compressed motive A for “der ist in tiefster Seele treu” (he is faithful in his deepest soul) in the same way that he wrote for the phrase “ich hab’ es getragen Sieben Jahr” (I have borne it for seven years) in section III. Through the use of this compressed motive A, Loewe links these two statements – “I have borne it for seven years; [I am] faithful in [my] deepest soul.” Loewe writes accents over the half step C♯ - C at the second iteration of this phrase of text, bringing more attention to it.



Archibald Douglas, mm. 243-244.

The increasing rhythmic values in the vocal line help propel the music forward. The first part of this section contains mostly longer notes, followed later by quarter notes, and finally triplets towards the end.

Loewe once again composes a long descending line using motive B at the end of this section. The melodic line is very similar to Archibald Douglas’s pleading melody from section III. This time however, the piano perfectly doubles the melody an octave above the vocal line. Where earlier Loewe used this music to show Archibald Douglas and King James in disagreement with each other, he now shows them in perfect harmony. This is also the only time in the score that the piano has doubled the melody above the voice, giving an

optimistic quality. The compression of this melodic line illustrates the two characters quickly riding away.

Archibald Douglas, mm. 257-260.

Loewe gives one final surprise at the end of the piece. The piano postlude portrays the two characters galloping off in a whirl of happiness with swirling figurations and simple harmonization in a *fortissimo* dynamic, not uncharacteristic of any other coda. The last two chords, however, are suddenly marked *piano*. This interesting shift in dynamic does not result in the explosive ending that could have been, but rather reminds the audience perhaps of a parent closing the book and saying “the end”.

Archibald Douglas, mm. 269-274.

Conclusion

This expansive ballad represents the pinnacle of Loewe's brilliant compositional style. Even though it is highly sectional, the piece still feels cohesive through his use of motives. The different singing styles and sections keep the listener engaged throughout the lengthy ballad and prevent a lull in the storytelling. Loewe uses an unbelievable amount of text painting that sets a very detailed image of each scene. He plays the melodies in the voice and piano against each other to create dialogue and reactions between the characters. He is able to use both the piano and the voice in such a way that the audience can feel the presence of both characters. *Archibald Douglas* exemplifies Loewe's efforts and contributions to the development and advancement of the ballad genre. With this work, it is readily apparent why Carl Loewe was considered Germany's greatest ballad composer.

CHAPTER 7: ANNOTATED SCORE – *ERLKÖNIG*, OP. 1 NO. 3

I have annotated the *Erlkönig* score with suggestions for the performers. The chilling effect of the whole ballad is brought to life through the combination of text and music. I have used an analysis of both the music and the text to identify and call attention to important musical moments. Reading the musical analysis in the corresponding chapter will give a clearer understanding of these important musical details. The performers should do their best to carefully follow the details that Loewe has already written into the music, such as careful adherence to articulations, dynamics, and other markings.

The success of this song is largely based on the singer and pianist achieving a distinct sound world for each of the three characters plus the narrator, and instantly switching from one to the next, without hesitation. The pianist must be equally invested in creating the world for which each character lives, otherwise the efforts of the singer will fall on deaf ears.

The opening and final stanzas should sound strong overall. The singer and pianist can both sing out here, and keep the dynamic up. These sections belong to the Narrator. Each time the Father is presented, the effect should be warm and comforting. We should get the sense that he is grounded to the earth. The music for the child should seem fretful and anxious, with an impression of a tug-of-war between the singer and pianist. The singer should adhere strictly to the rests, as this will increase the breathless quality of the line. The pianist should be careful not to overpedal these sections.

The sound effect for the Erlkönig should always sound other-worldly, like something out of a dream. The singer should imagine singing while smiling or leering to get the thin and pointed sound required of the Erlkönig. The pianist should use both the una corda pedal and the damper pedal generously for the Erlkönig's stanzas. Our modern piano will accumulate a lot of sound, so I would advise against following Loewe's long pedal marking; rather, change every two bars so as not to overwhelm the singer. The tempo can be slightly more relaxed in these sections than the overall tempo. The sixteenth notes in the piano should never feel agitated and should not be articulated so precisely. The ends of each of these stanzas should die away with the voice, like a fog dissipating.

Loewe's tempo marking, "*Geschwind*" ("fast"), leaves much room for interpretation by the performers; however, too fast or too slow and the sixteenth notes (as they change between sections) will lose their significance. I would advise a tempo of 92-104 to the dotted quarter.

NOTES (correlated to the letters in the score):

- a. The constant tremolo figure serves two purposes—first, it adds to the image of the scene being created, specifically of the wind swirling around. Secondly, it provides the mood. The figure in the opening should evoke a tugging nervousness, and perhaps even sound menacing. The pianist should be careful not to over-pedal or else risk losing this effect. I would advise not to depress the pedal fully; rather a light touch of pedal (perhaps halfway), changing frequently. The tremolo figure in the right hand should be clearly articulated.

- b. The singer should follow through with his *crescendo* all the way to the last word, “*Wind*”, without tapering off at the end of that phrase. Although Loewe notates an accent on “*Wind*”, this is more likely a reminder to the singer to continue to *crescendo* to the end of the line rather than added emphasis on the last note.
- c. The piano should not add an accent or raise the dynamic level to match the singer here. Loewe uses this moment to foreshadow the loss the Father suffers—he is not as triumphant as the music would have him seem.
- d. The alteration of the rhythmic pattern hints at the urgency of the situation. Keep the rhythm here very tight, and bring out the text (“*sicher*”).
- e. The deceptive cadence is a clue to the audience that the Father was not able to keep the boy safe. Each time this cadence is used, it is a musical clue that the text being sung is untrue. Draw attention to the deceptive cadence each time it happens by keeping the first phrase (with the deceptive cadence) louder than the second, except in the final instance (see note n).
- f. The singer should follow these rests exactly as written, even though the first rest falls in the middle of a word. The intended effect is to hear the Child’s breathlessness and fear.
- g. Accent the downbeats of these three measures in both the voice and piano to bring out and draw more attention to the minor second interval.
- h. This should be *Poco meno mosso*, but not too slowly. The pianist should use both pedals liberally to create a haze of sound. The tremolo figure in the right hand should not be articulated as clearly as in the other sections.

- i. The Erlkönig's melodic line should move fluidly between the notes, like a feather floating through the air. The leaps should never sound labored. Flexibility of the voice between the notes is very important to keep the line from sounding disjunct.
- j. Slide between these two notes to achieve the desired effect.
- k. The shift from the hazy sound-world of the Erlkönig's last phrase to the urgent sound of the boy's phrase must be sudden and immediate. Both pedals should be lifted and the sound cleared. Use a dry sound for the first four beats of the new section so the eighth notes in the piano are clearly heard, and clearly articulate the change from G minor to G major.
- l. The expanded interval to a third correlates with the boy's increasing distress. The pianist should bring out the voice crossing in the left hand to increase the tension between the two lines.
- m. Use a drier pedal to bring out the galloping rhythm in the left hand.
- n. Notice the expansion of the Erlkönig's melodic section. It is the same number of measures, but now in 9/8 so the amount of time has increased. This should not feel rushed in any way—Loewe is pointing out that the Erlkönig has the luxury of time, something the Father and Son do not have.
- o. The rhythm in this bar should feel playful and have a simple innocence in sound. Notice that Loewe uses the same rhythm to symbolize both the galloping horse and the daughters dancing. Use the accents to allow the line to “bounce.” The piano should keep the heavy pedals to differentiate between the soft bouncing of the children dancing and the urgent galloping of the horse.

p. The change to *piano* dynamic before the end of the statement highlights the poetry.

Willow trees are often used in poetry to symbolize sadness. The Father is realizing that he is losing his son. The dynamic change does not need to be *subito piano* – the octave leap in the voice will take care of the change. The piano must react to this dynamic change accordingly. The singer should draw attention to the text “Weiden so grau” with a slight lift between “alten” and “Weiden.”

q. The change to G minor from G major reveals to the audience that the Erlkönig is taking the boy. When the piano begins this bar, the chord change must sound ominous. Clearly articulate the change from B \sharp to B \flat . The singer must also change the color and quality of the sound in this bar to take the listener out of the dream world and into something more menacing. I would suggest a much brighter approach to the vowels in this phrase.

r. The accents on weak beats create instability within the phrase. It is important to bring these out as much as possible to emphasize the Boy’s final moments.

s. The *fortissimo* here must be immediate and the accents unrestrained to deliver the image of the desperate Father galloping at a feverish pace.

t. Both the singer and pianist should carefully observe the difference in rhythms, not only between their parts, but also between the left and right hands in the piano.

u. The final B \sharp is from the Erlkönig’s sound world. Notice that Loewe has presented both the keys for the Erlkönig’s world and the human world side by side. It is important that the listener can distinctly hear both the G major and then G minor chords.

Erlkönig

(Goethe)

(Originaltonart)

Op. 1 Nr. 3

6. *Geschwind* ($\text{♩} = 92-104$)

Wer rei-tet so spät durch Nacht und Wind?
Es ist der

Va - - ter mit sei - nem Kind, er hat den Kna - - ben wohl in - - dem

Arm, er faßt ihn si - - cher, er hält ihn

51

warm, er faßt ihn si - cher, er hält ihn

(e) piano piano

warm. „Mein

tenuto

mf

Sohn, was birgst du so bang dein Ge - sicht?“ „Siehst Va - ter du den

passag (f)

Erl - kö - nig nicht? den Er - - len - kö - nig mit Kron und Schweif?“ „Mein

(g)

Sohn. das ist ein Ne - - bel - streif,

mf

52

p

das ist ein Ne - belstreif!“

rit.

(secretly whisper and lure)

Heimlich flüsternd und lockend ①

(h) poco meno mosso tremolo

„Komm, lie - bes Kind, komm, geh mit mir, gar

pp una corda

schö-ne Spie - le *spiel ich mit dir, manch bun-te Blu-men sind an dem Strand, mei-ne*

Mut - ter hat manch gül-den Ge - wand.“

(k) „Mein a tempo (Tempo I)

p tutte corde

Va - - ter, mein Va - - ter, und hö - rest du nicht, was

53

Er - len - kö - nig mir lei - se ver - spricht? "Sei ru - hig,
 blei - be ru - hig, mein Kind, in dür - - ren Blät - tern säu - selt der
 Wind, in dür - ren Blät - tern säu - selt der Wind."
 Willst,
 fei - ner Kna - be, du mit mir gehn? Mei-ne Töch - ter sol - - len dich

54

war-ten schön, mei-ne Töch-ter füh - ren den nächt - li-chen Reihn und
 wie - gen und tan - zen und sin - gen dich ein.“ „Mein
(Tempo I)
tutte corde
 Va - ter, mein Va - ter, und siehst du nicht dort Erl - kö - nigs Töchter am dü - ste - ren
 Ort?“ „Mein Sohn, mein Sohn, ich seh es ge - nau. es schei - nen die
 al - ten Wei - den so grau, es schei - nen die al - ten Wei - den so
(>) (>)

grau.“ „Ich
tremolo
pp una corda
2ed.

lieb' dich, mich reizt dei-ne schö-ne Ge-stalt, und bist du nicht wil-lig, so brauch' ich Ge-
 (q)

* *2ed.* * *2ed.* *

walt.“ „Mein Va-ter, mein Va-ter, jetzt faßt er mich an, Erl-kö-nig
tutte corde

(r)

hat mir ein Leids ge-tan, Erl-kö-nig hat mir ein Leids ge-

p

56

tan.“ Dem Va - ter grau - set's, er rei - tet ge -
 ff (S)

schwind, er hält in den Ar - - men das äch - zende Kind, er-reicht den
 ff mf

cresc. Hof mit Mü - he und Not, in sei - -en Ar - men
 cresc. f p

das Kind war tot. (t) (u)

CONCLUDING REMARKS

As one of the major, if not most important, contributors to the genre, Carl Loewe pushed the boundaries of ballad composition. Loewe's ballads go far beyond just creating atmosphere for the poem – rather he paints the text in such detail that the listener can see the story unfold in their imagination and experience the drama through the characters. The fact that his heart was buried underneath his organ shows how much he was appreciated during his time.

Loewe's compositions blend Classical style with Romantic ideologies and often demand virtuoso performers with highly developed technical abilities. The ballads show his commitment to preserving the original poetic intention of the author. The onus of storytelling falls on both the singer and the pianist. Following in the footsteps of Zumsteeg, Loewe was not afraid to use several different singing styles within one piece to fit the action. His clever use of text painting enhances his ballads with an extraordinary amount of detail, unparalleled by other Romantic ballad composers.

Pianists take on the role of collaborator more often than soloist, so it is important for pianists to understand how their role as collaborators contributes to the larger vision of a given piece. Loewe relied heavily on the piano to create the mood, set the scene, and interpret the text. The pianist is equally important in his ballads – the singer alone cannot bring the story to life. The piano accompaniment adds additional elements of drama and suspense and reveals more information about the characters. It is the responsibility of the

pianist then to understand all of the elements provided by Loewe so both singer and pianist can best deliver the story.

Sadly, Loewe's compositions have been neglected over time. Though during his lifetime he was considered the "Schubert of the North", it seems this did his legacy a disservice, as he continued to be compared and pitted against Schubert.

There has been a recent resurgence of interest in composers who did not make it into the Western music repertory – the so-called "canon." Exposing these composers and their influential works to modern audiences challenges the idea of the Western music canon and makes us question why some composers are chosen over others. With every "new" work that gets exposed, we get a bigger picture of the music being heard and disseminated, and it is important for us as musicians to study as many figures as possible who were at the forefront of composition and performance during their time. The thoughtful craftsmanship and artfulness found in Carl Loewe's works remind us that there are still many composers who need to be rediscovered.

APPENDIX A: TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

*Translations for all 3 poems from *The Book of Lieder*, translated by Richard Stokes.

Erlkönig

Text by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Wer reitet so spät durch Nacht und Wind?
Es ist der Vater mit seinem Kind;
Er hat den Knaben wohl in dem Arm,
Er faßt ihn sicher, er hält ihn warm.

“Mein Sohn, was birgst du so bang dein
Gesicht?”
“Siehst, Vater, du den Erlkönig nicht?
Den Erlenkönig mit Kron’ und Schweif?”
“Mein Sohn, es ist ein Nebelstreif.”

“Du liebes Kind, komm, geh mit mir!
Gar schöne Spiele spiel’ ich mit dir;
Manch’ bunte Blumen sind an dem Strand;
Meine Mutter hat manch gülden Gewand.”

“Mein Vater, mein Vater, und hörest du
nicht,
Was Erlenkönig mir leise verspricht?”
“Sei ruhig, bleibe ruhig, mein Kind;
In dürren Blättern säuselt der Wind.”

“Willst, feiner Knabe, du mit mir gehn?
Meine Töchter sollen dich warten schön;
Meine Töchter führen den nächtlichen
Reihn,
Und wiegen und tanzen und singen dich
ein.”

“Mein Vater, mein Vater, und siehst du
nich dort
Erlkönigs Töchter am düstern Ort?”

Erlking

Translation by Richard Stokes

Who rides so late through night and wind?
It is the father with his child;
He has the boy safe in his arms,
He holds him close, he keeps him warm.

‘My son, why hide your face in fear?’
‘Can’t you see the Erlking, father?’
The Erlking with his crown and robe?’
‘My son, it is a streak of mist.’

‘You sweetest child, come go with me!
Wondrous games I’ll play with you;
Many bright flowers grow on the shore;
My mother has many a garment of gold.’

‘Father, O father, can’t you hear
The Erlking’s whispered promises?’
‘Be calm, stay calm, my child,
The wind is rustling in withered leaves.’

‘Won’t you come with me, fine boy?
My daughters shall take good care of you;
My daughters lead the nightly dance,
And will rock and dance and sing you to
sleep!

‘Father, O father, can’t you see
The Erlking’s daughters there in the
gloom?’

“Mein Sohn, mein Sohn, ich seh’ es
genau;
Es scheinen die alten Weiden so grau.”

“Ich liebe dich, mich reizt deine schöne
Gestalt;
Und bist du nicht willig, so brauch; ich
Gewalt.”
“Mein Vater, mein Vater, jetzt faßt er
mich an!
Erlkönig hat mir ein Leids getan!”

Dem Vater grauset’s, er reitet geschwind,
Er hält in Armen das ächzende Kind,
Erreicht den Hof mit Müh’ und Not;
In seinen Armen das Kind war tot.

‘My son, my son, I can see quite clearly:
It’s the old willows gleaming so grey.’

‘I love you. Your beautiful figure excites
me;
And if you’re not willing, I’ll take you by
force.’
‘Father, O father, he’s seizing me now!
The Erlking’s done me harm!’

The father shudders, swiftly he rides,
With the groaning child in his arms,
With a final effort he reaches home;
The child lay dead in his arms.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ Richard Stokes, trans., 311–312.

Heinrich der Vogler

Text by Johann Nepomuk Vogl

Herr Heinrich sitzt am Vogelherd,
Recht froh und wohlgemut;
Aus tausend Perlen blinkt und blitzt
Der Morgenröte Glut.

In Wies und Feld, in Wald und Au,
Horch, welch ein süßer Schall!
Der Lerche Sang, der Wachtel Schlag,
Die süße Nachtigall!

Herr Heinrich schaut so fröhlich drein:
Wie schön ist heut die Welt!
Was gilt's, heut gibt's 'nen guten Fang!
Er schaut zum Himmelszelt.

Er lauscht und streicht sich von der Stirn
Das blondgelockte Haar...
Ei doch! Was sprengt den dort herauf
Für eine Reiterschar?

Der Staub wallt auf, der Hufschlag dröhnt,
Es naht der Waffen Klang;
Daß Gott! Die Herrn verderben mir
Den ganzen Vogelfang!

Ei nun! Was gibt's? Es halt der Troß
Vorm Herzog plötzlich an,
Herr Heinrich tritt hervor und spricht:
Wen sucht ihr Herrn? Sagt an!

Da schwenken sie die Fähnlein bunt
Und jauchzen: Unsern Herrn!
Hoch lebe Kaiser Heinrich, hoch!
Des Sachsenlandes Stern!

Sich neigend knien sie vor ihm hin,
Und huldigen ihm still,
Und rufen, als er staunend fragt:
's ist deutschen Reiches Will!

Henry the Fowler

Translation by Richard Stokes

Lord Henry sits by his fowling-floor,
Happily and full of cheer;
The glow of dawn glistens
From a thousand dewy pearls.

In field and meadow, wood and glade –
Just listen to those sweet sounds!
The lark's song, the quail's call,
The sweet voice of the nightingale!

Lord Henry looks on cheerfully:
The world seems so fair today!
The catch, I wager, will be good!
He looks up at the sky.

He listens and brushes from his brow
His blond and curly hair ...
But ah! What horsemen are these
Galloping up so fast?

Dust billows, hooves drum,
The clank of arms draws near;
Great God, these men will wreck
The whole of this day's hunt!

But what is this? All at once
The troop pulls up before the duke,
Lord Henry steps forward and says:
Tell me, good sirs, who is it you seek?

At that, they wave their bright flags,
And rejoicing cry: 'Our Master!
Long may Emperor Henry live,
Long live the star of Saxony!'

They bow and kneel before him
And pay him silent homage,
And to his astonished question, roar:
'The German Empire wills it!'

Da blickt Herr Heinrich tief bewegt
Hinauf zum Himmelszelt:
Da gabst mir einen guten Fang!
Herr Gott, wie dir's gefällt!

Archibald Douglas
Text by Theodor Fontane

“Ich hab’ es getragen Sieben Jahr’,
Und ich kann es nicht tragen mehr,
Wo immer die Welt am schönsten war,
Da war sie öd’ und leer.

Ich will hintreten vor sein Gesicht
In dieser Knechtsgestalt,
Er kann meine Bitte versagen nicht,
Ich bin ja worden so alt.

Und trüg’ er noch den alten Groll
Frisch wie am ersten Tag,
So komme, was da kommen soll,
Und komme, was da mag.”

Graf Douglas spricht’s. Am Weg ein Stein
Lud ihn zu harder Ruh,
Er sah in Wald und Feld hinein,
Die Augen fielen ihm zu.

Er trug einen Harnisch, rostig und schwer,
Darüber eiin Pilgerkleid –
Da horch, vom Waldrand scholl es her
Wie von Hörnern und Jagdgeleit.

Und Kies und Staub aufwirbelte dicht,
Herjagte Meut’ und Mann,
Und ehe der Graf sich aufgericht’t,
Waren Roß und Reiter heran.

Deeply moved, Lord Henry looks up
To the heavens above:
‘Thou has granted me a good catch,
Lord God, as it pleaseth Thee!’,⁷⁷

Archibald Douglas
Translation by Richard Stokes

‘I have borne it for seven years,
And can bear it no longer!
Wherever the world was loveliest,
To me it was void and drear.

I shall step right up to him,
Clad in this vassal’s clothes,
He cannot now refuse my plea,
For I have become so old.

And if he still bears the ancient grudge,
Fresh as on that first day,
Then happen what must,
Then come what may.’

So spake Lord Douglas. A wayside rock
Invited him to stony rest,
He looked across at forest and field,
And his eyelids closed.

He wore a rusty and heavy armour
And over it a pilgrim’s cloak. –
But hark! from the forest’s edge,
There came the sounds of bugle and hunt.

Gravel and dust went whirling thick,
Huntsmen and hounds came bounding up,
And before Lord Douglas could rise,
Horses and riders were by his side.

⁷⁷ Richard Stokes, trans., 183–184.

Konig Jakob saß auf hohem Roß,
 Graf Douglas grüßte tief,
 Dem König das Blut in die Wangen schoß,
 Der Douglas aber rief:

“König Jakob, schaue mich gnädig an
 Und höre mich in Geduld!
 Was meine Brüder dir angetan,
 Es war nicht meine Schuld.

Denk nicht an den alten Douglas-Neid,
 Der trotzig dich bekriegt,
 Denk lieber an deine Kinderzeit,
 Wo ich dich auf Knieen gewiegt.

Denk lieber zurück an Stirling-Schloß,
 Wo ich Spielzeug dir geschnitzt,
 Dich gehoben auf deines Vaters Roß
 Und Pfeile dir zugespitzt.

Denk lieber zurück an Linlithgow,
 An den See und den Vogelherd,
 Wo ich dich fischen und jagen froh
 Und schwimmen und springen gelehrt.

Und denk an alles, was einstens war,
 Und sänftige deinen Sinn,
 Ich hab' es getragen Sieben Jahr',
 Daß ich ein Douglas bin.”

“Ich seh' dich nicht, Graf Archibald,
 Ich hör' deine Stimme nicht,
 Mir ist, als ob ein Rauschen im Wald
 Von alten Zeiten spricht.

Mir klingt das Rauschen süß und traut,
 Ich lausch' ihm immer noch,
 Dazwischen aber klingt es laut:
 Er ist ein Douglas doch.

Ich seh dich nicht, ich hör' dich nicht,
 Das ist alles, was ich kann,
 Ein Douglas vor meinem Angesicht
 Wär' ein verlor'ner Mann”

King James sat high upon his horse,
 Lord Douglas bowed down low;
 Blood flushed into the King's face,
 Douglas, however, cried:

‘King James, look on me in mercy,
 And in patience hear me out!
 What my brothers did to you
 Was no fault of mine.

Think not of the old Douglas envy
 That defiantly wars against you,
 Think rather of your childhood days
 When I rocked you on my knee.

Think rather back to Stirling Castle,
 Where I used to carve you toys,
 Lifted you onto your father's horse
 And sharpened arrows for you.

Think rather back to Linlithgow,
 To the loch and the fowling-floor,
 Where I taught you to fish and hunt,
 And how to swim and jump.

O think of all that used to be,
 And let your heart relent –
 I have borne it for seven years
 That I am of Douglas blood.’

‘I see you not, Lord Archibald,
 I do not hear your voice,
 It is as though the rustling woods
 Spoke to me of days gone by.

That rustling sounds sweetly in my ear,
 And still I listen to it,
 Yet all the while I hear the cry:
 He is a Douglas still.

I see you not, I hear you not,
 That is as much as I can do –
 A Douglas who came within my sight
 He were as good as dead.’

König Jakob gab seinem Roß den Spron,
 Bergan ging jetzt sein Ritt,
 Graf Douglas faßte den Zügel vorn
 Und hielt mit dem Könige Schritt.

Der Wag war steil, und die Sonne stach,
 Sein Panzerhemd war schwer,
 Doc hob er schier zusammenbrach,
 Er lief doch nebenher.

“König Jakob, ich was dein Seneschall,
 Ich will es nicht fürder sein,
 Ich will nur tränken dein Roß im Stall
 Und ihm schütten die Körner ein.

Ich will ihm selber machen die Streu
 Und es tränken mit eigner Hand,
 Nur laß mich atmen wieder aufs neu
 Die Luft im Vaterland.

Und willst du nicht, so hab einen Mut,
 Und ich will es danken dir,
 Und zieh dein Schwert und triff mich gut
 Und laß mich sterben hier.”

König Jakob sprang herab vom Pferd,
 Hell leuchtete sein Gesicht,
 Aus der Scheide zog er sein breites
 Schwert,
 Aber fallen ließ er es nicht.

“Nimm’s hin, nimm’s hin und trag es aufs
 neu
 Und bewache mir meine Ruh!
 Der ist in tiefster Seele treu,
 Wer die Heimat so liebt wie du.

Zu Roß, wir reiten nach Linlithgow,
 Und du reitest an meiner Seit’,
 Da wollen wir fischen und jagen froh
 Als wie in alter Zeit.”

King James put spur to his horse
 And rode away uphill,
 Lord Douglas seized the horse’s reins
 And kept pace with the king.

The way was steep, the sun burned,
 His mail shirt weighed him down,
 But though his body almost broke,
 Still he ran alongside.

‘King James, I was your seneschal,
 That I will be no more,
 I only wish to water your horse
 And pour the oats for his feed.

I myself will put out his straw
 And fetch his drink with my own hand,
 Only let me breathe once more
 The air of my native land.

If you will not, then dare the deed,
 And I shall thank you for it,
 And draw your sword and strike me down
 And let me perish here.’

King James leapt down from his horse,
 His face was shining bright,
 From the scabbard he drew his sword,
 But did not let it fall.

‘Take it, take it, and wear it again,
 And guard my peace of mind!
 For he is loyal in heart and soul
 Who loves his homeland as you.

To horse! We shall ride to Linlithgow,
 And you will ride at my side,
 There we shall happily fish and hunt,
 As we did in days gone by.’⁷⁸

⁷⁸ Richard Stokes, trans., 166–168.

APPENDIX B: SCORES – *Heinrich der Vogler* and *Archibald Douglas*

HEINRICH DER VOGLER, OP. 56. NO. 1

The music in the first section should never sound labored from either the singer or pianist. Though still legato, the singer should have a light approach to the eighth notes. The pianist should take care not to overpedal the first section, otherwise you will not achieve the desired atmosphere of the opening. Both musicians should respect the simplicity of the music in this section, as the subsequent sections will provide plenty of excitement.

The pianist should observe the articulations on page 16 carefully. The second and third lines can be entirely without pedal, except catch pedals to connect the right hand chords. The left hand notes should all be *staccato*.

The return to *Tempo I, con espressione* can be *poco meno mosso* and should be much more legato than the opening. The pianist should take care to follow the singer (*col canto*) through the last two phrases of the song.

b. Die sächsischen Kaiser.

Heinrich der Vogler.

Ballade von J. N. Vogl.

Dem Freunde, Herrn Assessor JUSTUS GÜNTZ in Dresden gewidmet.

Andante comodo.

Op. 56 Nr. 1.
Componirt im „April 1836“

Nr. 2.

Herr Heinrich sitzt am Vogelherd, recht froh und wohlge - muth; aus
tausend Perlen blinkt und blitzt der Morgen - rö - the Gluth. In - Wies' und Feld, in
Wald und Au, horch, welch ein sü - sser Schall! Der Lerche Sang, der Wach - tel Schlag, die
sü - sse Nachti - gall!

15

Herr Heinrich schaut so_ fröh.lich drein; „Wie schön ist heut' die

Welt! Was gilt's, heut' giebt's 'nen gu. ten Fang!“ Er lugt zum Himmels.zelt. *Er*

Allegro.

lauscht, er lauscht, und streicht sich von der Stirn das

blond ge. lock. te Haar. „Ei doch! ei doch! was

sprengt denn dort her. auf für ei. ne Rei. terschar?“ *Der*

V. A. 1804.

16

Staub wallt auf, der Hufschlag dröhnt, es naht der Waf - fen Klang; — „Dass
 * Ped. *

Gott! die Herrn ver - der - ben mir den gan - zen Vo - gel - fang!“ „Ei
 *

nun! was giebt's?“ Es hält der Tross vorm Her - zog plötz - lich an, Herr
 *

Hein - rich tritt her - vor und spricht: „Wen sucht ihr, Herrn? Sagt an!“ Da
 cresc.

schwenken sie die Fähn - lein bunt und jauch - zen: „Un - sern Herrn! — Hoch
 *

V. A. 1804.

17

cresc. le - be Kai - ser Hein - rich! Hoch des Sach - sen - lan - des Stern!" Sich
cresc. nei - gend knien sie vor ihn hin und hul - di - gen ihm still, und
Rec. * ru - fen, als er stau - nend fragt: „s ist deutschen Reichen Will!" Da
cresc.

Tempo 10, con espressione.

Tempo I, con espressione.

blickt Herr Heinrich tief be-wegt hin - auf zum Him-mels - zelt: „Du

cresc. riten.

gabst mir ei-nen gu-ten Fang! Herr Gott, wie dir's ge-fällt!“

cresc. riten. *pp*

V. A. 1804.

ARCHIBALD DOUGLAS, OP. 128

Loewe provides everything needed to create the different scenes, moods, and characters in this ballad. As always, the pianist should take care to precisely follow the written articulations and pedal accordingly. In this late work, Loewe has deliberately written in many more markings than in his earlier compositions, so careful adherence to his wishes will be the key to a successful performance of this piece. An understanding of the different styles (i.e. *recitative*, *arioso*, *Wiegenlied*) will also be important in finding the correct sound for not only the different larger sections, but also the smaller subsections. The singer should use a deeper, heavier approach to the sound for the character of King James. He should always have a commanding presence. The sound for Archibald Douglas can vary depending on the section.

I have provided suggestions for *tempi*. Although the opening is marked *Grave*, this is in reference to the character of the opening section more than the speed. I have also provided some fingering suggestions for the pianist.

Ultimately, the success of this piece lies in the close collaboration between singer and pianist. The pianist should never feel like an accompanist, but rather an equal part of the team.

38

hin . treten vor sein Ge . sicht in _ die _ ser Knechtsge .

cresc. *sf* *dim.*

stalt, er kann meine Bit . te ver . sa . gen nicht, ich _

cresc.

bin ja wor . den so alt.

dim.

Und trüg' er noch den al . ten Groll

sf *dim.* *p* *cresc.* *sf*

frisch wie am er . . sten Tag, so kom . me was da

dim. *cresc.* *sf*

V. A. 1408.

39

kom - men soll, und kom - me was da mag!“

Graf

diminuendo riten.

Douglasspricht's; am Weg ein Stein lud ihn zu harter Ruh. — Er

[a tempo]

sah in Wald und Feld hin-ein, die Au - gen fie len ihm

zu. Er

V. A. 1803.

40

trug einen Har nisch rostig und schwer, da rüber ein Pil gér kleid.

cresc.

Allegretto, non troppo presto.

una corda

pp

sempre con Pedale

Da horch, da horch, da

un poco crescendo la voce

cresc.

horch, vom Wald rand scholl es her, wie von Hör nern und

tutte corde, ma piano

cresc.

Jagd ge leit, und Kies und

più crescendo

V. A. 1803.

Staub auf - wir - belte dicht,

forte

her jag - te Meu - te und Mann,

un pochettino ritenuto

und e - he der Graf sich

> dim. > più dim. > p riten.

stringendo a tempo

auf - ge - richt't, waren Ross und Rei - ter her - an tempo

stringendo

cresc.

dim. rit.

Kö - nig Ja - kob sass auf ho - hem Ross, Graf Dou - glas grüß - te

dim. rit.

42 a tempo *cresc.* f p rit.
tief, dem König das Blut in die Wangenschoss, der Douglas aber
a tempo *cresc. assai* p rit.

Andante. *con molta devozione* > > portando la voce
rief: *espress.* „König Ja-kob, schaue mich gnädig an und höre mich in Ge-
duld, was mei-ne Brü-der dir an - gethan, was mei-ne Brü-der dir
cresc. più cresc.
an - gethan, es war nicht mei-ne Schuld. Denk' nicht an den al-ten
Adagio. Andante con moto.
Douglasneid, der trotzig dich be - kriegt, denk' lie - ber an dei - ne
V. A. 1803.

43

Kin . der. zeit, wo ich dich auf Knieen ge . wiegt, denk' lie . ber zurück an
 Stir.lings-Schloss, wo ich Spielzeug dir ge . schnitzt, dich ge . ho . ben auf dei . nes
 Va . ters Ross und Pfeile dir zu . ge . spitzt. Denk' lie . ber zurück an
 Lin . lithgow, an den See und den Vo . gel . herd, wo . ich dich . fischen und
 ja . gen froh und schwimmen und springen gelehrt. Und denk' an . al . les, was

V. A. 1808.

44

ein.stens.war, und sänftige dei.nen Sinn, ich hab'es ge . tra.gen sie . ben

dim. rit. tremando la voce

Jahr, dass ich ein Douglas bin, dass ich ein Dou - glas bin!"

dim. dim. rit. cresc.

a tempo mit unterdrücktem Zorn; abgestossen forte

„Ich seh'dich nicht, Graf Archibald, ich

riten. a tempo

leise cresc. dim.

hör' deine Stimme nicht,— mir ist, als ob ein Rauschen im Wald von

pp una corda

al ten Zei.ten spricht. Mir klingt das Rauschen süss und traut, ich

V. A. 1803.

46

Dou - gлас fass - te den Zü - gel vorn und hielt mit dem Kö - ni - ge
 Schritt. Der Weg war steil, und die Son - ne stach, sein
 Pan - zerhemd war schwer, doch ob er schier zu - sammenbrach, er
 lief doch ne - ben - her. „König Ja - kob, ich war dein
 Se - ne.schall, ich will es nicht für - der sein, ich will nur trän - ken dein

(a little compliant)

sf *ein wenig nachgebend* *a tempo* *cresc.*

dim. *cresc.* *f*

1 2 3 1 2 5

V. A. 1803.

47

nachgebend *a tempo*
 Ross im Stall, und ihm schüt - ten die Kör - ner
ein, a tempo und

cresc. *sf* *dim.* *cresc.*
 will ihm sel - ber machen die Streu und es trän - ken mit eig - ner

ritenuto *a tempo, ma piano*
 Hand, _____ nur lass mich ath - men
ritenuto *dim.* *p*

wie - der aufs neu' die Luft im Va - ter
ritenuto *portando la voce*
 land, die Luft im Va - - - - ter.

48

a tempo
 land.
 a tempo
 f più cresc.
 Und willst du nicht, so hab' einen Muth, und ich
 stacc.
 dim.
 will es dan ken dir, und zieh dein Schwert, und triff mich gut, und lass mich
 p cresc.
 riten.
 lento
 scolla parte of
 a tempo
 sterben hier! König Ja - kob sprang her.
 fa tempo
 ab vom Pferd, hell leuchte - te sein Ge - sicht, 8.....
 cresc.
 ritard.
 aus der Schei - de zog er sein brei - tes Schwert, a tempo. riten.
 cresc. ritard.
 *Ped. *Ped. *Ped. *Ped. *Ped. *
 V. A. 1803.

49

Allegro con majestà.

aber fallen liess es nicht:
diminuendo piano dim.

Ped. * Ped. 3 3 ad. *

trem. * ad. *

wa. ad.

wache mir meine Ruh; der ist in tiefster Seele
cresc.

dim.

treu, wer die Hei math so liebt wie du, der ist in
cresc.

rit.

Adagio.

tiefster Seele treu, wer die Hei math liebt wie
colla parte p colla parte

50

a tempo *cresc.*

du! Zu Ross, wir rei - ten nach Lin.lith.gow, und du rei - test an mei - ner

a tempo

Seit; da - wol - len wir si - schen und ja - gen froh, da - wol - len wir fischen und

ja - gen froh, als wie in al - ter Zeit, als wie in

al - ter Zeit, als wie in al - ter

Zeit." "

V. A. 1803.

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ABSTRACT

Carl Loewe composed over 150 ballads during his lifetime. His unique compositional style in creating these often expansive works elevated the art ballad genre to greater importance. His approach to the piano accompaniment led to a new level of collaboration between the voice and piano. Although most scholars agree Loewe's greatest contribution to the musical repertory is his development of the art ballad, most of his work has been forgotten and rarely performed. This paper delves into his compositional style through a focused study of three of Loewe's ballads – *Erlkönig*, *Heinrich der Vogler*, and *Archibald Douglas*.